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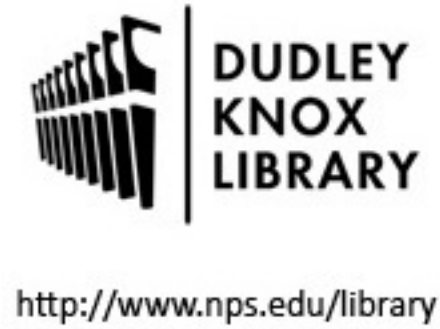

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Monterey, California

THESIS

NATO EXPANSION AND THE BALTIC STATES

by

Timothy R. Trampenau

December 1996

Thesis Advisor: David S. Yost

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NATO EXPANSION AND THE BALTIC STATES

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requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the prospects for the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) in the NATO expansion process. To provide historical perspective, previous NATO expansions and recent official NATO policies towards expansion are reviewed. Actions and deliberations in the Baltic states regarding NATO expansion are examined to set the stage for the most critical elements of the analysis, the American and Russian positions. The decisive influence of American leadership within NATO is assessed, and views on NATO expansion within the American body politic and the elected leadership are surveyed. The role of Russian opposition to NATO expansion and, more importantly, the sources of this opposition within the Russian political elites are examined, with particular attention to the formal decision-making structure and internal political dynamics. Finally, the thesis assesses the probable effect of alternative forms of NATO expansion on European security and stability.

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I. INTRODUCTION TO NATO EXPANSION

> *The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European state in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any state so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.*
>
> Article 10, North Atlantic Treaty

The collapse of the "Soviet Empire" in 1989-1991 has left a gap between Russia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This gap is filled with the states of Central Europe, the new nations of Ukraine and Belarus, and the Baltic states. These states see themselves poised between two possible futures, one consisting of democratic freedom and economic prosperity and the other involving risks of Russian dominance, authoritarianism, and economic stagnation, if not chaos. The Baltic states have experienced both independence and annexation by the Soviet Union and, therefore, are especially cognizant of their delicate position. The three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, are attempting to ally themselves with the West and are seeking NATO membership for various reasons--above all, to protect themselves from future Russian expansionism.

An invitation to join NATO can only come from the unanimous decision of the existing members of the alliance. It is therefore important to study how the sixteen sovereign states of the alliance debate the various aspects of expansion and reach a decision acceptable to all the members. The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the study of the decision-making process within NATO. Many factors will influence decisions on whether to expand NATO, and whether the Baltic states should be included in an expanded alliance. This thesis critically examines the proposition that American and Russian views are the most critical factors in this decision. The nature of this subject would tend to gravitate towards a generic analysis of the NATO expansion debate and the decision-making process. However, this thesis attempts to study the case of the three Baltic states and their position within the NATO expansion debate. The issue of NATO expansion and the politics behind

the decision-making process are at times dealt with in a general sense. When appropriate, the specific subject of the Baltic states is examined and analyzed.

Organizationally, this thesis is divided into four segments or blocks of research and one of analysis. These segments correspond to the five chapters of the thesis. Chapter I discusses the past and present of NATO expansion. The five previous enlargements of NATO and their circumstances are described, as are NATO's current plans and policies regarding expansion. Chapter II introduces the specific case of the Baltic states and discusses their relationship with NATO. The recent history and current situation, the actions taken by the Baltic states to gain inclusion in the alliance, and their problems in meeting NATO requirements are examined. Chapter III describes the critical role in NATO decision-making played by the United States, and assesses the probable significance of the other NATO allies in decision-making with respect to enlargement. The chapter examines both the general views on expansion found within the American body politic and the specific views held by American leaders. Chapter IV investigates the special role played by Russia in the NATO expansion decision-making process. The specific issues concerning expansion and their implications for Russia, along with the internal political dynamics that influence the positions of Russian leaders on expansion, are examined. Chapter V analyses the critical factors in the decision to expand NATO. This final chapter focuses on the position of the Baltic states and the role of the United States and Russia in the NATO decision-making process. It concludes by examining some possible outcomes and the implications of these outcomes on NATO, Russia, and the Baltic states.

A. PREVIOUS ENLARGEMENTS OF NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty was originally signed on 4 April 1949 in Washington, D.C., by twelve states. Since that time, four states have joined NATO, expanding the territory covered by the collective defense pact. A fifth enlargement of NATO territory occurred when the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was disestablished. Five new Länder were then united with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and came under NATO protection. These prior expansions of the alliance occurred under specific circumstances that are important in understanding their relevance and impact on the current expansion debate.

The first two expansions occurred at the same time. They were the accession of Greece and Turkey to the North Atlantic Treaty on 18 February 1952. Both states had been considered as potential adherents to the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949, but were never invited to the negotiations that resulted in the treaty. A number of reasons account for the absence of Greece and Turkey at these negotiations. Many of the Northern European and Scandinavian states felt that the inclusion of Greece and Turkey would alter the "Atlantic" focus of the alliance and dilute American military aid. There were also questions of whether Turkey was even a European state and acceptable as a member of the alliance. Some of the future member states further believed that defense requirements in the eastern Mediterranean Sea region would overstretch the alliance's limited resources and "extend their commitments beyond the field of their actual interest."[1] The British government was concerned with the security of Greece and Turkey but was intent on building a Mediterranean and Near East defense pact that would be anchored around those two states. In the end, the few states that wanted Greece and Turkey to be members of the alliance were unwilling to delay the creation of the alliance to fight for their immediate inclusion.[2]

After the birth of the alliance, Greece and Turkey immediately began a campaign for membership in NATO. In September of 1950, their requests for membership were rejected by the alliance. Two significant events altered the situation and led to the accession of the two states into NATO. The first was the Korean War. Both states participated by sending combat troops to serve under the United Nations command. In fact, the Turkish brigade was the third largest national contingent in the war, after the forces of the United States and South Korea. The Greek and Turkish motive for sending troops was "to override objections to their entry into NATO."[3] The second event was the reorganization of NATO in 1951 as a response to the Korean War. With the establishment in 1951 of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), which was responsible for planning the

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[1] Hamilton Armstrong, "Eisenhower's Right Flank," Foreign Affairs, July 1951, p. 660.

[2] Alexander Rendel, "The Uncertain Months: British Anxieties," in Nicholas Sherwen, ed., NATO's Anxious Birth (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p. 59.

[3] Thanos Veremis, "Greece and NATO: Continuity and Change," in John Chipman, ed., NATO's Southern Allies (New York: Routledge, 1988) p. 242.

defense of Europe, it became more obvious to the alliance members that Greece and Turkey were critical nations on the southern flank of Europe. The large standing armies of the two states, which had a combined total of about twenty-five divisions, were also considered important for the defense of Europe from Soviet expansionism.[4] With these two events, the Korean War and NATO reorganization, the attitudes of the alliance members changed, and Greece and Turkey were invited to join the alliance.

The third expansion was the accession of the Federal Republic of Germany to the North Atlantic Treaty on 5 May 1955. Like Greece and Turkey, West Germany was not invited to be an original signatory to the North Atlantic Treaty. At the time Germany was still an occupied state ruled by four powers and two competing blocs. The United States had already begun to debate the importance of rearming allied-occupied West Germany and integrating these forces under NATO command to defend against the Soviets, but the European allies--particularly France--were not ready to accept a re-armed Germany so soon after the Second World War. The Korean War and subsequent NATO reorganization gave even greater importance to establishing and building up the West German armed forces in the face of apparent increasing pressure by the Soviet bloc.

The French, who were the most concerned with a rearmed Germany, understood that German rearmament would occur at some point and tried to shape the process in a fashion advantageous to French security. In late 1950, the Pleven Plan for a European Army was introduced by the French to NATO. This plan, later known as the European Defense Community (EDC), would have created a supra-national European army in which German troops would be integrated at the battalion level. The plan would also have ensured that French and Allied rearmament would be completed before that of West Germany. The EDC was debated for a few years with no progress and increasing American displeasure. Ironically, it was the French National Assembly that rejected the EDC and put an end to the idea of a European Army in NATO.[5]

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[4] Lawrence Kaplan, NATO and the United States (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), p. 47.

[5] William Park, Defending the West (Boulder: Westview Press; 1986), p. 18.

After the demise of the EDC in 1954, the FRG still supported rearmament and membership in NATO. A new plan, sponsored by British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, was devised that would rearm West Germany and integrate these national forces at the division level under the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR). The London and Paris Agreements provided for West Germany's membership as a fully sovereign nation in both the Western European Union (WEU) and NATO.[6] Within a few months, the FRG was formally invited to join NATO.

The fourth expansion of the alliance was the accession of Spain to the North Atlantic Treaty on 30 May 1982. Spain, like Greece and Turkey, had been considered for inclusion in the original negotiations of the North Atlantic Treaty. However, Spain was not invited as a result of Dutch and Scandinavian antipathy towards the authoritarian Franco government. Later, in the 1950s and 1960s, the United States resurrected the idea of including Spain in NATO, but the idea failed to gain support as a result of the continued dictatorship in Spain.[7] Ironically, Portugal, as much a dictatorship under the Salazar regime as Spain under Franco, was invited to the original treaty negotiations. Also, Greece and Turkey, both of which had had periods of authoritarian government, saw no adverse effects on their applications for membership in NATO. It appears that in the calculus of alliance building, the antipathy towards the Spanish dictatorship was not overcome by the strategic importance of Spain, unlike the cases of Portugal, Greece, and Turkey. By the early 1950s, Spain's importance to NATO was lessened by the Spanish-American bilateral agreements that allowed for the stationing of American naval and air forces, including nuclear weapons, on Spanish territory.

After the death of Franco and Spain's return to democracy in the late 1970s, allied support for Spanish entry into the alliance grew for two main reasons. The first reason was the expected Spanish contribution to the alliance's military strength. Though the Spanish

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6 Richard Kugler, Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War (Santa Monica: RAND, 1993), pp. 65-66.

7 Thomas Carothers, "Spain, NATO and Democracy," World Today, July-August 1981, p. 298.

armed forces consisted of only a poorly equipped and trained army and a small, but professional, Navy and Air Force, Spain could add strategic depth to the alliance. Considering France's refusal for the peacetime use of its territory, the accession of Spain to the alliance would greatly expand the amount of territory available for peacetime training and basing. In wartime, Spain could act as a strategic redoubt, especially as its national forces were better adapted for territorial defense than for external operations.[8] The second, and more important reason, was to support and consolidate Spanish democracy. It was assumed that joining NATO would give Spain's army, which had a tendency to alter the governmental structure through extra-constitutional measures, something to concentrate on other than internal politics. Spain requested to join the alliance in June of 1981 and became a member in May of 1982, less than a year later.

The final expansion of the territory covered by NATO resulted from the unification of Germany on 3 October 1990. The GDR's Communist government was overturned by popular dissent in late 1989 and early 1990. In March of 1990, free elections were held in the GDR, and the conservative "Alliance for Germany" won a strong majority. This government soon stated that it supported unification with the FRG under the West German Basic Law. The heads of state and government of the members of the alliance, in the London Declaration of 6 July 1990, gave their support for a united Germany anchored in NATO and tied to the West in the European Community.

After extensive negotiations between the two German states and the four victorious powers: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union, an agreement, the so-called Two-plus-Four Treaty, was reached that would allow the united German state to remain in NATO. The treaty placed restrictions on the use of former GDR territory by Germany and NATO. It included a prohibition on the permanent stationing of non-German NATO forces, nuclear weapons, and "offensive" German forces (and limitations on NATO exercises) in the former East Germany. The treaty also provided for the removal of all Soviet troops from the region by 1994 and the reduction of the German

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[8] Glenn Snyder, "Spain in NATO: The Reluctant Partner," in Federico Gil and Joseph Tulchin, eds., Spain's Entry Into NATO (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988), p. 141.

armed forces to about 50% less than the combined FRG-GDR level.[9] With the signing of this treaty and the official unification on 3 October 1990, the eastern border of NATO shifted a further 200 miles to the east.

B. NATO'S CURRENT PLANS FOR EXPANSION

1. The Evolution of the Official NATO Position Since the Cold War

The official NATO view on the future expansion of the alliance is certain to be a moderate and cautious one. As an amalgamation of ideas from many, sometimes antagonistic, political parties and coalitions within sixteen sovereign states, debated by senior members of government at frequent meetings, the final statements to be found in official documents are sure to be free of radical or cavalier conclusions. The official position has evolved since the opening of the Berlin Wall and German unification from a declared desire for dialogue with the former Warsaw Pact enemies to plans for enlargement that may soon see the first new NATO member since Spain joined in 1982.

The first post-Cold War statement was the London Declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government at the North Atlantic Council (NAC) meeting on 6 July 1990. In this declaration, the heads of state and government proposed a joint declaration with the Warsaw Treaty Organization stating that the two organizations were "no longer adversaries" and promised "to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state."[10] The former Warsaw Pact governments were also invited to establish a diplomatic liaison with NATO.[11] A key element of this document was the call for the expansion and institutionalization of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).[12] The line of thinking favored by some analysts and politicians was that the CSCE would be used to link the emerging states of

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9 Kugler, Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War, p. 471-2.

10 London Declaration, North Atlantic Council, Bureau of Public Affairs, Washington DC, 6 July 1990, para. 6.

11 Ibid., para. 7.

12 Ibid., para. 22.

Eastern Europe with the NATO countries in a collective security arrangement, separate from NATO. Thus, the Cold War was declared over, and the new lines of communication were established with former adversaries.

The next big step down the road to expansion was taken by the Heads of State and Government at the NAC meeting on 8 November 1991. They issued the Rome Declaration, which provided for the establishment of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). The NACC was intended "to develop a more institutional relationship of consultation and cooperation on political and security issues" with the former Warsaw Pact states. The Rome Declaration was specifically worded to state that the establishment of the NACC was to "contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the CSCE without prejudice to its competence and mechanisms."[13] The NAC later pledged to actively support the continued development and strengthening of the CSCE.[14] Though the NACC was considered necessary to establish better working relations with the Eastern European countries, it was still hoped that the CSCE would play the dominant role in East European security and that an expansion of NATO would not be necessary.

At the next meeting of the Heads of State and Government at the NAC on 11 January 1994, two major steps towards NATO expansion were taken. In the Brussels Declaration, the allies reaffirmed that "the Alliance, as provided for in Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, remains open to membership of other European states"[15] and initiated the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. By stating that NATO was open for new members, the allies answered the question being asked by many Eastern European states. The requirements for membership in the declaration were vague enough to give the alliance partners time to fully prepare for the possible accession of new members. The PfP, a program that would provide for bilateral political and military agreements with any NACC

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[13] Rome Declaration, North Atlantic Council, NATO Press Service, Brussels, 8 November 1991, para. 11.

[14] Ibid., para. 14.

[15] Brussels Declaration, North Atlantic Council, NATO Press Service, Brussels, 11 January 1994, para. 12.

or CSCE member state, was also designed to further postpone decisions on NATO expansion. The PfP was a disappointment to some of the Eastern European states, notably the Visegrad Four (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic), that had hoped for accelerated membership in NATO. But as active PfP participation was made to "play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO,"[16] all the NATO hopefuls were quick to sign on. Facilities for permanent representatives at NATO Headquarters were also to be made available for NACC and PfP members, ensuring closer working relations and cooperation. The declaration once again stated that NATO was "deeply committed to further strengthening" the CSCE[17], but by this time it was obvious that the CSCE would not be sufficient as the guarantor of security in Eastern Europe.

Though NATO has declared itself amenable to expansion, relatively little action towards this end has been taken since the establishment of the PfP. In a draft report by the North Atlantic Assembly's Working Group on NATO Enlargement, Karsten Voigt pointed out that expansion "is not an issue which lends itself to easy solutions: on the contrary it is complicated and potentially very divisive."[18] He later stated that there should be an early enlargement for reasons of enhanced regional stability and moral grounds. "Yet, that early enlargement of NATO is unlikely given the PfP compromise and the competing priorities of the main actors in this process, is equally clear."[19] The Final Communiqué from the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council on 30 May 1995 put NATO expansion on hold until after the completion of an internal study on the subject. The same document restated the position that active participation in the PfP was critical and was "helping to prepare those countries which aspire to membership in the Alliance."[20] At the Defense

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16 Ibid., para. 13.

17 Ibid., para. 10.

18 Karsten Voigt, "Enlargement of the Alliance: Draft Special Report of the Working Group on NATO Enlargement," North Atlantic Assembly, Brussels, 2 November 1994, para. 5.

19 Ibid., para. 18.

Planning Committee meeting a month later, the need for all new NATO members to be part of the integrated military structure to maintain "strong collective defense arrangements"[21] was discussed. The new members would not be allowed to make special arrangements concerning their level of participation, such as Spain or France had.

In September of 1995, the completed Study on NATO Enlargement was released. The study was quite specific about the new members' level of participation, because their ability and the manner in which they "intend to contribute to the collective defense will be important criteria" for accession. There was also a statement that "we should avoid new forms of contribution to NATO collective defense which would complicate unnecessarily practical cooperation among Allies," which seemed to rule out any nation joining with less than full participation.[22] Allies in the integrated military structure hold that there will be no more "Frances or Spains" in the alliance. Russian opposition to NATO expansion has been taken into consideration in this study. The statement that "NATO's relations with other European states, whether cooperation partners or not, are important factors to consider in taking any decision to proceed with the enlargement process,"[23] seems to imply that Russian opposition might play some part in the process. But in a later paragraph, the study states that "NATO decisions cannot be subject to any veto or *droit de regard* by a non-member state,"[24] which clearly precludes a Russian ability to halt the expansion. In an obvious concession to Russian fears, the study claims that the re-deployment of Allied forces to the territories of new members, besides being costly, would be unnecessary. "The regular and frequent presence of Allied forces, on exercise or when other situations

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20 Noordwijk-Ann-Zee Final Communiqué, North Atlantic Council, NATO Press Service, Brussels, 30 May 1995, para. 3.

21 Defence Planning Committee Final Communiqué, NATO Press Service, Brussels, 8 June 1995, para. 9 .

22 Study on NATO Enlargement, NATO Press Service, Brussels, September 1995, para. 48.

23 Ibid., para. 13.

24 Ibid., para. 27.

demand, is another way to demonstrate NATO's commitment to collective defense."[25] The study seems to purposely leave the issue of permanently stationing troops in the former Warsaw Pact states a little clouded, so as to not directly threaten the Russians with increased military pressures on their western borders.

Though this study is certainly more specific than any previous NATO document on the expansion procedure, there is still a certain vagueness about it. In the final chapter, it clearly states that the previous accessions have no bearing on the current situation as the "general political and security context" has changed.[26] Again, the study talks about the need to carefully consider the "precise timing, sequence and content of the accession process", but does not give any details or timetables.[27] As with previous NATO documents, the study stresses that all applicants will be judged on their ability to increase the security of the alliance and refuses to specify a geographical limit of possible expansion.

The enlargement study was described as a "valuable foundation for the enlargement process"[28] in the Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Meeting of the NAC on 5 December 1995. In this document, the Allies stated that "the Alliance will continue the steady, measured and transparent progress leading to eventual enlargement"[29] and that the "eventual enlargement" would be delayed until 1997 at the earliest. The entire year of 1996 would be given over to three elements of the expansion process. Firstly, an "intensified, individual dialogue" between prospective members and NATO, concerning the enlargement study, would be conducted through bilateral consultations. Secondly, the Partnership for Peace program would continue to conduct activities that will prepare prospective members to assume the various responsibilities that come with NATO membership. Finally, the

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25 Ibid., para. 54.

26 Ibid., para. 79.

27 Ibid., para. 81.

28 Brussels Final Communiqué, North Atlantic Council, NATO Press Service, 5 December 1995, para. 7.

29 Ibid., para. 2.

Alliance would conduct a self-study of internal adaptations, specifically resource and staffing implications, that would be necessitated by enlargement. The results of these three elements are to be assessed at the December 1996 meeting of the NAC, and future courses of action will then be decided upon. The effect of this statement is to give the appearance that NATO enlargement is stalled until 1997 or even later.

2. Official NATO Requirements for Prospective Members

Prior to any state being invited to join the alliance, certain conditions and criteria will need to be fulfilled by that prospective member. These criteria concern both military aspects that pertain to the question of interoperability with NATO forces and internal political developments. When the NAC issued the Brussels Declaration on 11 January 1994 and reaffirmed that the alliance remained open for new members, they did not list any specific conditions for prospective members to conform to prior to accession to the treaty. The NAC only stated, as does Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, that new members would have to be "European states in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area."[30] Interestingly, the Brussels Declaration did mention a number of times that the "democratic states to our East" were the focus of this new emphasis on enlargement, but it failed to state which countries were considered democratic or give any definition of a "democratic state." One of the intentions of the NATO enlargement study was to give definition to these vague requirements.

The Study on NATO Enlargement, completed in September of 1995, as was intended, delineated many of the specific requirements that would have to be fulfilled prior to consideration for inclusion in the alliance. These requirements fell into two distinct categories; internal political criteria, and military criteria. Of the political development required by the study, there were five major aspects that are perceived as critical conditions on membership. The first was the need to conform to the basic principles of the North Atlantic Treaty; "democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law."[31] The second was the expectation that new members would not vote down or "close the door" on accession by

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30 Brussels Declaration, 11 January 1994, para. 12.

31 Study on NATO Enlargement, para. 70.

later candidates. The next and possibly most important political requirement was the resolution of all "ethnic disputes, external territorial disputes, including irredentist claims, or internal jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means."[32] The fourth was the establishment of democratic and civilian control of the armed forces and appropriate civil-military relations. The final was the commitment to promoting stability through "economic liberty, social justice, and environmental responsibility."[33] In addition to these political criteria, there were a number of military criteria for the prospective members.

The military requirements focused on the themes of standardization and interoperability with existing NATO forces. These military criteria included the acceptance of NATO policies and doctrine, funding and staffing representatives at NATO HQ, SHAPE, SACLANT, and the various NATO staffs and agencies, applying NATO security rules and procedures, and exchanging intelligence. Another critical interoperability criteria was achieving "a sufficient level of training and equipment to operate effectively with NATO forces."[34] The study further specified that "NATO standardization priorities include commonality of doctrines and procedures, interoperability of command, control and communications and major weapon systems, and interchangeability of ammunition and primary combat supplies."[35] These requirements are not surprising considering the multinational nature of the NATO integrated military command structure and the alliance itself. Without strict standards for interoperability, the armed forces of the alliance members, when operating under NATO command, would fail to be a credible fighting force. There was one major criteria that did not fall into the category of standardization and interoperability. The study stated that a key factor in the decision to include a prospective member would be their ability to "contribute militarily to collective defence and to the

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32 Ibid., para. 72.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., para. 74.

35 Ibid., para. 76.

Alliance's new missions."[36] This statement is somewhat vague and a minimum or expected contribution was never defined in the study. This criteria could be used to accelerate or delay the accession of certain states while disregarding the status of the other requirements.

Despite the specific nature of the criteria listed in the Study on NATO Enlargement, the study is not the final word on what a prospective state will be required to accomplish prior to being considered for acceptance in NATO. A "disclaimer" in the study states that "there is no fixed or rigid list of criteria for inviting new members to join the Alliance."[37] This means that it is possible for a state to accede to the treaty without meeting all the requirements listed in the study, or that a state that has met all the requirements in the study may still not be allowed to join the alliance. This situation, with no exact set of minimum criteria for membership, would seem to be in opposition to the alliance's goal of transparency in the enlargement process. Though it is prudent for the alliance to give itself some leeway in deciding which nations would be acceptable for inclusion in the alliance, this situation certainly creates doubts in the minds of prospective members as to the sincerity of the alliance's claim to the transparency of the enlargement process.

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36 Ibid., para. 75.

37 Ibid., para. 70.

II. THE BALTIC STATES AND NATO EXPANSION

When the elephants fight, it is the grass that is trampled.
African Proverb

The states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have a very unique role to play in the drama of NATO expansion. According to the Russians, their strategic location on Russia's western border, separating Kaliningrad from the rest of Russia, is critical to Russian national security. The Russians believe that these states should be in their sphere of influence, or even a part of an expanded Russia, and maintain that an expanded NATO must not include the Baltic states. The West, which hopes to solidify the recent eastward expansion of democracy and free markets, would prefer to see the Baltic states protected from possible Russian revisionism. While NATO has not stated or implied that it will invite the Baltic states to join, it has stated that it will not allow the Russians to "veto" any possible members. The three Baltic states, more than any other country freed by the collapse of the "Soviet empire," are caught in the middle of a struggle of wills between NATO and Russia.

The Baltic states have strong ties to Western Europe. The Estonians, who speak a language similar to Finnish, and the Latvians, who speak an Indo-European language, are both predominantly Lutheran and have a long history as a part of Scandinavia and Northern Europe. These states were ruled by the Danes, Germans, and Swedes prior to their inclusion in the Russian empire in the early eighteenth century. The Lithuanians, who speak a very pure Indo-European language, are almost entirely Roman Catholic and have strong historical ties to Poland. The Lithuanians were incorporated into the Russian empire in the second half of the eighteenth century. Even as a part of the Russian empire, the Baltic region was considered a "window to the West", and its European, as opposed to Russian, culture flourished. Despite attempts at "Russification" by Imperial Russia and the Soviet regime, this region, the eastern terminus of Latin Christianity and European culture, was able to maintain its heritage. During the Baltic states' brief period of independence during the "inter-war years," these states were fully integrated into Europe both politically and

economically. The forced annexation of these states into the USSR, which Germany fully condoned and France and the United Kingdom failed to act on, created a feeling of guilt in the West similar to that felt over Czechoslovakia and the failures of Munich. With this in mind, the Western leaders feel a need to ensure that this dark chapter in European history is not repeated. Now that these states are independent again, they are working to re-integrate into Europe and reverse the effects of half a century of Soviet political and economic control. To this end, the Baltic states have requested to be admitted as members of NATO as a guarantee against future Russian aggression.

The Russians see the situation very differently. For many Russians, the fact that this region was a part of the Russian empire for almost 200 years and a part of the Soviet Union for over fifty years gives them the right to have a special influence over the region. Some Russians would go so far as to say that the Baltic states should be re-incorporated into Russia. The Baltic states, which were still seen as a "window to the West" during the Soviet period, occupy a very strategic region for Russia. These states separate the Kaliningrad district from the rest of Russia and are very close to the Russian "heartland." Considering the close relations between Russia and Belarus and Russian influence in Ukraine, the Baltic states (in Russian eyes at least) constitute a geographic threat to the political and demographic core of the Russian state. If these states were to join NATO, the American-led alliance that "won" the Cold War, this would be perceived as a grave threat to the security of Russia. Conversely, possession of this region would give Russia a well-defined and defensible border with Poland and the rest of Europe. The presence of large numbers of ethnic Russians in these states, primarily remnants of the Soviet period, makes the issue even more emotional for the Russian government. Though these ethnic Russians have no desire to leave the Baltic states and "return" to Russia, nationalist politicians in Moscow use this issue to justify expanded influence in the internal affairs of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Finally, the Baltic states are still a "window to the West" for Russia. The loss of important port facilities on the Baltic Sea and the robust, by Soviet standards, economic infrastructure of these states was a blow to the economy of Russia, one that some Russians would like to reverse. For these reasons, the Russians have demanded special

influence over the Baltic states and have threatened to take military action if they are admitted into NATO.

The sensitive nature of this region, with its geopolitical and emotional importance to both Western Europe and Russia, makes it a critical aspect of the NATO expansion debate. This is a region that has significant and legitimate reasons for seeking inclusion in the alliance. Because it is also vital to the security of Russia, some observers see the Baltic states as an "albatross" around the neck of NATO-Russian relations. When the fates of the Baltic states are discussed, all aspects of the issue of NATO expansion are revealed and debated. It is therefore important to understand the exact circumstances of the Baltic states and how they relate to the various aspects of the NATO expansion debate in the West and in Russia.

A. THE HISTORY OF THE BALTIC STATES

The area that is now Estonia and Latvia was first integrated into Europe by religious crusade and trade. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the predominantly German Brothers of the Militia of Christ, also known as the Sword-Brothers, began to look towards the pagan north after suffering defeats in their Mediterranean crusades. The German crusaders, who were later absorbed by the Teutonic Knights, another military-religious order that had conquered Prussia, controlled Latvia and southern Estonia by middle of the fourteenth century. During the same period, the Danes seized northern Estonia and founded the town of Tallinn as their administrative center. As the Danes and Teutonic Knights expanded their domain in this region, they came into conflict with the nascent Russian Empire to their east. In 1343, the Teutonic Knights purchased the Danish holdings and consolidated their control of Estonia and Latvia. All throughout this period, the Hanseatic League was active in commerce in this region. The cities of Riga and Narva were important centers of trade for the league and continued to grow and thrive, even during the crusader wars. The Protestant Reformation signaled the end of the Teutonic Knights, but the Baltic Germans remained as the secular nobility of the region. During the sixteenth century, Sweden and Russia fought for domination of the Baltic coast, with Sweden eventually pushing the Russians out of Estonia and Latvia. The final collapse of the

Teutonic Knights and the Swedish domination brought Lutheranism and some elements of European culture to the recently converted Baltic peasants.

The early history of Lithuania is somewhat different from that of the other two Baltic states. The better organized Lithuanians successfully resisted the German crusaders and turned Lithuania into an aggressive regional power, extending its control to the south and east. However, the constant pressure of the Teutonic Knights forced the Lithuanian leaders to seek a personal union with Poland, which occurred in 1386 and resulted in the their conversion to Roman Catholicism and increased Polonization of the Lithuanian nobility. By 1569, Russian pressure on Lithuania made a formal commonwealth with Poland necessary. This Polish Commonwealth, in which Lithuania was the junior partner, successfully defended its territory for over two hundred years, but suffered a steep economic decline, which left Lithuania significantly poorer than Estonia and Latvia.[38]

Russia again attempted to expand to the Baltic coast when, in 1700, Peter the Great launched his Great Northern War against Sweden. After initial defeats, the expanded Russian Army was victorious, and Sweden ceded Estonia and Latvia to Russia in the 1721 Treaty of Nystad. Peter the Great, who wanted to modernize Russia on a European model, was motivated to fight this war in order to give Russia direct contact with Western Europe. Russia, along with Prussia and Austria, later turned on the internally weakened Polish Commonwealth. In the three partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793, and 1795, Lithuania joined Estonia and Latvia as part of the Russian empire. During this period of Russian control, the Baltic German elites and their culture dominated Estonian and Latvian life, while Polonized Lithuanian elites and Polish culture dominated Lithuanian life.[39] The Baltic Germans, who had been guaranteed permanent control over local administration by the Tsar, quickly adapted to life in the Russian empire and found great opportunities to rise to powerful positions in the Russian army and civil service. Meanwhile, the Lithuanian elites repeatedly took part in the various Polish uprisings.[40]

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38 Anatol Lieven, The Baltic Revolution (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 48.

39 David Crowe, The Baltic States and the Great Powers (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 1.

The mid to late nineteenth century saw the "National Awakening" of the native populations of the three Baltic states. This ethnic nationalism, based on linguistic and historical criteria, had emerged as a political ideology for peoples without a state in the Central and Eastern European empires in the mid-1800s.[41] The national cultures of these primarily peasant peoples were greatly influenced by the state-approved church, the culture of the elites, and German Romanticism. Despite the recent birth of this national awareness, it proved strong enough to resist a campaign of intense Russification carried out during the last few decades of the Russian empire.

In the aftermath of the First World War, which saw fighting between the Germans and Russians in the Baltic region and the eventual collapse of both their empires, the Baltic states gained independence. After the first Russian Revolution, the nationalist leaders of the Baltic states aimed to acquire "autonomy within a democratic Russian Federation, if only because they regarded such a link as their only protection against conquest by the Germans; they declared full independence only after Russia itself had collapsed into the hands of the Bolsheviks."[42] The German army, which occupied the Baltic states in the spring of 1918, withdrew after the armistice in November 1918. The Bolsheviks then tried to invade and were repulsed by local militias with British assistance in Estonia and German assistance in Latvia. By the end of 1919, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had cleared their territories of all foreign forces, with the exception of the Polish occupation of the Vilnius region of Lithuania.

The newly independent Baltic states quickly began to work on integrating themselves with Europe and securing their borders through diplomacy. In 1920, all three states signed treaties with the Soviet Union that renounced all territorial claims. Estonia and Latvia were granted *de jure* recognition by the Allied Supreme Council in January 1921, while Lithuania was denied recognition until 1922 due to the disputes over Memel

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40 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, pp. 49-50.

41 Kristian Gerner and Stefan Hedlund, The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 49.

42 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p. 55.

and Vilnius. All three states joined the League of Nations in the fall of 1921. Despite this official recognition, the two main Western powers, France and the United Kingdom, refused to accept the "absolute permanency of the Baltic states, and both governments refused to adopt any stance that would force either of them to defend Baltic sovereignty in the future."[43] France even "assumed that they would ultimately be reunited with a 'resurrected liberal Russia'."[44] Economic integration with Europe proved to be much easier and more successful than political integration. The Baltic states had been the most industrialized part of the Russian empire and the main conduit of trade between Russia and the West. As a result, a large segment of Baltic society understood Western capitalism and could "facilitate the transition towards a fully functioning market economy. Their well-established agrarian economies had much to offer their major industrial trading partners, and in return the Baltic states became major importers of Western manufactured goods."[45] This set of circumstances allowed the Baltic states to rapidly integrate with the European economy and to cut virtually all of their economic ties with the newly established Soviet Union.

These newly independent states started out as parliamentary democracies but soon went through periods of authoritarian government. The power of the Baltic German nobles was broken, and land reforms were carried out. All three states adopted a multi-party system based on universal suffrage with parliamentary rule and an elected president as head of state. They all granted full civil rights to minorities and were considered "models of tolerance and minority rights in that region of Europe."[46] The world-wide recession of 1929 had a severe effect on the agrarian economies of the Baltic states. Social and political unrest, spawned by the economic recession, fostered the development of Fascist parties on the model of Germany. Authoritarian regimes were established in Estonia and Latvia in

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[43] Crowe, The Baltic States and the Great Powers, p. 4.

[44] Ibid., p. 6.

[45] Graham Smith, The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 6.

[46] John Fitzmaurice, The Baltic: A Regional Future (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 99.

1934 to pre-empt Fascist coups. An authoritarian government had been established in chronically unstable Lithuania in 1926. By the end of the 1930s, the economic situation had improved, and the authoritarian leaders began to re-establish a democratic form of government.[47] This re-democratization was never completed, owing in large part to the Soviet annexation.

Baltic attempts to form security arrangements after independence failed to produce any results. Estonia and Latvia tried to establish security arrangements with Finland and Poland in 1921, 1922, and 1925, but Russian threats of aggression succeeded in disrupting negotiations and kept the Baltic states isolated.[48] Lithuania did not take part as it refused to meet with Poland as a result of the dispute over the Vilnius region. Unable to raise regional interest in a security pact, the three Baltic states finally worked together to create the Baltic Entente in 1934. This weak security pact soon became irrelevant as the members continued to bicker over petty items and trade disputes. Without a strong alliance between the three Baltic states and with no security guarantees by the Western democracies, the Baltic states were virtually defenseless against their two aggressive neighbors, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

The secret protocols to the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact left the Baltic states within the Soviet sphere of influence. After the dismemberment of Poland in late 1939, the Soviet Union demanded military basing rights in the Baltic states. All three states acquiesced, with Lithuania receiving the Vilnius region as a reward. In July 1940, shortly after the fall of France, the Soviets forcibly annexed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. During the initial phase of annexation, Soviet forces deported 14,000 and executed 2,000 political leaders, military officers, and national elites. The Soviets later deported another 60,000 Balts in a second wave of arrests just prior to the German invasion.[49] Needless to say, there was no Baltic resistance to Germany's Operation Barbarosa in June 1941. The Baltic

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47 Gerner and Hedlund, The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire, pp. 57-58.

48 Crowe, The Baltic States and the Great Powers, pp. 7-9.

49 Fitzmaurice, The Baltic: A Regional Future, p. 112.

peoples did resist the return of the Red Army in 1944, with some groups of partisans, known as the "Forest Brothers", fighting as late as 1953.

This armed resistance was eventually broken by a brutal assault on the Baltic peoples perpetrated by the Russian-dominated Soviet Union. Once the Red Army regained control of the region, a campaign of collectivization of agriculture, rapid industrialization, and Russification began. Massive numbers of former political party members, middle class citizens, and farmers resisting collectivization were arrested and deported. Between 1944 and 1949 about 140,000 Estonians, 250,000 Latvians, and 550,000 Lithuanians were deported to Eastern Siberia and Central Asia.[50] During this same period, rapid industrialization created a need for industrial workers. A huge wave of immigrants, mostly Russian, flooded the Baltics, directed by Stalin's government in Moscow and drawn by the higher standard of living to be found in the region. As Anatol Lieven wrote, "these in many cases moved straight into flats abandoned by the refugees who had fled to the West, or belonging to Balts deported to Siberia." By the mid-1950s, 230,000 immigrants had arrived in Estonia, 535,000 in Latvia, and 160,000 in Lithuania, where industrialization was slowest and armed resistance most effective.[51]

Though the deportations and Russian immigration reduced the proportion of ethnic natives in the population of the Baltic states, and the Russians dominated the government and economy, the Baltic states were never successfully Russified. Even within the Soviet Union, it was obvious that the Baltic states, popularly referred to as "our West", were different from the rest of the state.[52] "The fact that the educational and professional qualifications of Russian and Slavic immigrants was not superior, but often inferior to the natives', facilitated development of a new national elite in the Baltics."[53] It was this new elite that led the Baltic peoples to independence from the Soviet Union.

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50 Ibid., p. 114.

51 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p. 183.

52 Gerner and Hedlund, The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire, p. 50.

Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, who gained power in 1985, began a series of reforms, including *glasnot* and *perestroika*, with the intent of strengthening the Soviet economy. An outcome of these reforms was the independence of the Baltic states and the end of the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1987, demonstrations in support of environmental causes and to celebrate historical days, the "calendar demonstrations," began to occur. These demonstrations continued, and in the summer of 1988, independent political movements were formed in each of the Baltic states. "These moves began gingerly, and by spring 1988, an Estonian Popular Front movement, followed quickly by the Lithuanian Popular Front (Sajudis), and the Latvian Popular Front began to emerge."[54] Up to this point, Gorbachev had supported the actions in the Baltic Soviet republics as part of his reform campaign.

The Popular Fronts radicalized by the end of 1988 and started to call for Baltic independence. The native Baltic officials that had risen to power in the Baltic Soviet republics were sympathetic to these demands, and by the summer of 1989, all three governments had declared themselves sovereign within the Soviet Union and economically independent. In March 1990, Lithuania declared its independence from the Soviet Union. Moscow at first responded with economic sanctions, which seemed to hurt the Soviet Union as much as Lithuania, and then, in January 1991, resorted to limited amounts of military force in an attempt to dissuade the Baltic states from seeking independence.[55] This failed, as the results of referendums held in all three states in February and March 1991 were overwhelmingly for independence, even among ethnic Russian voters. Independence finally came in the aftermath of the August 1991 attempted coup in Moscow by Communist hard-liners against Gorbachev.

The re-integration with the West during this second period of independence was more difficult than after the First World War. Political recognition and acceptance in the

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53 Gerhard Simon, Nationalism and Policy Toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 218.

54 Crowe, The Baltic States and the Great Powers, p. 179.

55 Gerner and Hedlund, The Baltic States and the End of the Soviet Empire, p. 147.

United Nations and OSCE came relatively quickly, but economic integration proved to be much harder the second time. Half a century of Soviet domination had left the Baltic states with heavily industrialized and highly specialized economies that were tightly bound to Russia and other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. Specifically, the resource-poor Baltic states were dependent on Russia for raw materials and energy. In the 1990s, unlike the 1920s, the Baltic states did not have established markets in Europe for their products, a situation which was made all the more difficult by "the highly regionalised structure of a Europe dominated by the European Union."[56] Finally, despite securing their independence, it was not until August 1994 that the last Soviet "occupation" troops actually left the Baltic states.

B. WHY THE NATO OPTION

The leaders of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are very aware of the difficult situation in which they find themselves. They share a border, bereft of any natural defenses, with Russia; and their territory lacks sufficient depth to slow an attack. As Hannes Walter, an Estonian security analyst, stated, "to say bluntly that Estonia needs a defence against the Russian threat is not an unfriendly act, but an acknowledgment of reality."[57] The armed forces of the three states, which can only muster a few thousand troops with no heavy weapons, will never be a match for the forces available to even a prostrate Russian Army. Their only reasonable defensive strategy would be a "CNN Defense," with a brief formal resistance and a guerrilla campaign, while hoping that Western pressure would force the Russians to leave on their own.[58] The threat of Russian revisionism is very real and a constant concern for two main reasons.

The first reason is the extremely vocal Russian concern for the condition of the ethnic Russians living in the Baltic states. As of 1994, the ethnic Russian portion of the

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56 Smith, The Baltic States: The National Self-Determination of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, p. 7.

57 Hannes Walter, 28 December 1994, cited in Igor Grazin, "Why the Baltics Want to Join NATO," Focus, February 1996, p. 2.

58 Lieven, The Baltic Revolution, p. 320.

population was 29.4% in Estonia, 33.5% in Latvia, and 8.5% in Lithuania.[59] These large Russian minorities, which tend to be loyal to the Baltic states, are still a great concern and a potential problem for relations with Russia. Many leaders from Russia's national parties and members of the government have stated that it is the responsibility of the Russian Federation to protect the rights and privileges of the Baltic Russians, especially in Estonia and Latvia, and therefore, Russia should have influence over the legally-elected governments of the Baltic states. As Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev stated in April 1995, "there may be cases when the use of direct military force will be needed to defend our compatriots abroad."[60] For all their declared loyalty to the Baltic Russians, there is much doubt as to the sincerity of Russia's concern. Many of the ethnic Russians in the Baltic states feel that all this posturing is done for reasons of domestic politics within Russia. "Moscow does not give a damn about Russians in Latvia! Moscow is manipulating the Russian question in Latvia for its own purposes," contends Aleksei Grigoriev, a spokesman for the moderates in Latvia's Russian community and a member of parliament.[61] For a large portion of the ethnic Russian minority, there is no loyalty to Moscow nor a desire to "return" to Russia.

An extensive survey done in the fall of 1993 found that relations between ethnic groups within the Baltic states were not nearly as bad as had been stated by the Russian government. In the survey, a majority of Russian speakers (74% in Estonia, 62% in Latvia, and 88% in Lithuania) said that inter-ethnic relations were good, which is better than results from other countries such as Germany or the United Kingdom. The Russian government may feel that it speaks for the Baltic Russians, but that does not mean the Baltic Russians feel a similar closeness. Over three-quarters of all Russian speakers felt that the Baltic

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59 Martin Klatt, "Russians in the Near-Abroad," RFE/RL Research Report, 19 August 1994, p. 35.

60 Andrei Kozyrev, 18 April 1995, cited in Peter van Hamm, The Baltic States: Security and Defence After Independence, Chaillot Paper No. 19 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1995), p. 7.

61 Aleksei Grigoriev, cited in Richard Krickus, "Latvia's "Russian Question"," RFE/RL Research Report, 30 April 1993, p. 32.

states "offer a better chance to improve living standards than does Russia", and 62% said that conditions for people like them are worse in Russia.[62] Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Krylov's comment is very telling, "The fact that there are not too many people who would like to leave Latvia says something in favor of the Latvian government."[63] It does indeed. Despite the fact that most of the Baltic Russians see themselves as a part of the Baltic states and not as a part of Russia, the threat of Russian aggression in the name of supporting ethnic Russians in the near-abroad creates insecurity in the Baltic states.

The second reason for Baltic insecurity is a perceived Russian desire to restore the Russian empire or the Russian-dominated Soviet Union that would include the Baltic states. A Lithuanian representative commented that when the Russians say "near abroad", it sounds very much like "temporary abroad".[64] Russian "occupation" troops only left Estonia in August 1994, while a few remain in Latvia, and Lithuania is a transit route for the Kaliningrad Military District. The Baltic states, with historical memories of Russian aggression and recent experiences of Russian domination, fear the consequences of a revisionist Russia. Articles in Russia's nationalist press that call for subjugating or even annexing the Baltic states, though not numerous, reinforce the idea that they are exposed to real security threats from an expansionist Russia. Comments by the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, such as, "soon there will be no Lithuanians, Estonians, and Latvians in the Baltics. I'll act as Hitler did,"[65] no matter how unrealistic, create huge doubts about future security. Actions like the Russian Duma's decision to repeal the December 1991 Belovezhskaya Agreement, which codified the breakup of the

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62 Richard Rose and William Maley, "Conflict or Compromise in the Baltic States?" RFE/RL Research Reports, 15 July 1994, pp. 28-33.

63 Sergey Krylov, cited in Moscow INTERFAX in English, 10 July 1995, cited in FBIS-SOV-95-133, 10 July 1995.

64 Carl Bildt, "The Baltic Litmus Test," Foreign Affairs, September/October 1994, p. 81.

65 William Maley, "Does Russia Speak for the Baltic Russians?" The World Today, January 1995, p. 6.

Soviet Union, and promote the "deepening of the integration of the people who were united in the USSR,"[66] though legally irrelevant, do effect the mindset of the Baltic governments. In addition, the recent Russo-Belarusian "Community Treaty," which calls for "coordinated foreign policies and general positions on basic international questions" and joint efforts for the protection of external borders, military development, and security,[67] increases the perceived threat of Russian expansionism and inflates fears of encirclement by the Russians in the Baltic states. The Baltic states fear that Russia will take an openly revisionist course and once again attempt to annex them. For this reason, they feel it necessary to find a suitable security architecture that will protect their independence.

A large number of possible security arrangements for the Baltic states exist. The five most important options are: a new "Baltic Entente" , a "Nordic Defense League," the collective security of the OSCE and UN, the Western European Union (WEU), and NATO. A new "Baltic Entente" has failed to form for the same lack of interest that doomed the first to failure. The Baltic Council of Ministers, which was established in June 1994 by Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, was intended to "revitalize cooperation on matters of foreign, security and defence policy." This group has seen some success, such as the creation of a joint Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion and a trilateral agreement on defense cooperation signed in February 1995, but it has yet to fully integrate the defense organizations of the three countries.[68] Though many declarations of unity have been made, "divergent foreign policy priorities and subjective security concerns check the development of a trilateral security and defence alliance."[69] The Baltic states are also finding it difficult to reach trilateral economic

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66 Text of Duma Resolution, 16 March 1996, cited in Gleb Cherkasov, "Duma Denounces Beloveahskaya Agreements," Sevodnya, 16 March 1996, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVIII, No. 11, 1995, p. 2.

67 Russo-Belarusian Treaty on the Community of Sovereign Republics, Article No. 3, 2 April 1996, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 14, 1996, p. 7.

68 Mare Haab, "Estonia and Europe: Security and Defence," Chaillot Paper No. 19 (Paris, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1995), p. 50.

agreements as the three states have similar economies and are thus generally competitors. Even if the Baltic states were able to create a fully integrated defensive alliance, it is doubtful that this would be any more capable of defending against a Russian invasion than the current defensive posture.

The idea of a "Nordic Defense League" that would include the Scandinavian states (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland) and the Baltic states has been raised. Considering the material and technical support that the Scandinavian states, especially Denmark and Sweden, are supplying to the Baltic states, this idea seems to be a good one. However, it also has fatal flaws. The Scandinavian states, which during the Cold War developed individual security and defense policies, are interested in enhancing the security of the Baltic Sea region, but not in creating defense commitments that their limited forces would have difficulty fulfilling. They are focusing their aid on the Baltic states for reasons that are "a typical Scandinavian mix: altruism and pragmatism. If Baltic borders or nuclear reactors leak, the results will soon be felt"[70] in Scandinavia. These states, with the exception of Norway, do feel certain historic and cultural ties to Estonia and Latvia but not to Polinized Catholic Lithuania. Finally, with Sweden and Finland having in 1995 joined Denmark in the EU, which is developing a Common Foreign and Security Policy, the Baltic states will find it difficult to participate in a Nordic security alliance.[71] The concept of a "Nordic Defense League" is not realistic, considering the attitudes of the Scandinavian states.

The two collective security organizations, the OSCE and UN, which the Baltic states are members of, would be unable to guarantee their security. Both organizations have Russia, the only real threat to the Baltic states, as a member. The OSCE, which has no standing capability to provide aid, requires virtually unanimous consent to act. Russia with its ability to influence some of the other post-Soviet states, would be able to block any

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69 Vidmantas Purlys and Gintautus Vilkelis, "Cooperation Between the Baltic States: A Lithuanian View," NATO Review, September 1995, p. 30.

70 "Sweden's Baltic Bulwark," Economist, 9 July 1994, p. 53.

71 Haab, "Estonia and Europe: Security and Defence," p. 50.

decision it did not care for. In the case of the UN, Russia's Security Council veto would be sufficient to stop any action to assist the Baltic states. These institutions are reminiscent of another discredited collective security organization, the League of Nations, which failed to preserve Baltic independence in the 1930's. Thus, in the opinion of the Baltic leaders, the OSCE and UN would be unable to protect the Baltic states.

Another security option would be to join the WEU, which is a defensive alliance that provides security guarantees for its members. The problem is that the Baltic states are not members of the EU and are not eligible for full membership in the WEU. The Baltic states, which have Europe Agreements with the EU, were granted Associate Partner status in the WEU in June 1994, but this associate partnership does not provide for any security guarantees.[72] Though this first step shows that there is a possibility of future EU/WEU membership, that may be a long way in the future and does not affect the security concerns of the present. There is a possibility that Estonia, which has progressed the farthest towards meeting the EU requirements for entry, might be able to join with the first group of Central European states. "Thus a form of linkage between Russian behavior towards the Baltic states and the EU's overall relationship with Russia would be established,"[73] creating a greater sense of security in the Baltic states. Though the WEU would certainly be an attractive defense structure for the Baltic states, there are difficult economic requirements for EU membership that must be met before they can avail themselves of the security provided by the WEU.

The remaining defense option is membership in NATO. This alliance gives its members security guarantees and certainly has the military resources to fulfill its responsibilities. It has no strict economic requirements for entry and, as a result of Soviet-era propaganda, "the Atlantic Alliance was perceived," by the Baltic states, "as the most powerful anti-Soviet structure. This made NATO all the more attractive, since the general

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72 Peter van Hamm, The Baltic States: Security and Defence After Independence, Chaillot Paper No. 19 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1995), p. 4.

73 Ronald Asmus and Robert Nurick, "NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States," Survival, Summer 1996, p. 134.

feeling in Estonia [,Latvia, and Lithuania] was that the country should side with whatever body seemed to have a strong anti-Russian/Soviet connotation."[74] NATO is perceived to be a strong and reliable alliance of democratic states that has proven itself over nearly fifty years of existence. The Baltic states, whose goal is to ensure their independence as democratic states with free-market economies, feel that membership in the alliance will give them the security to achieve their goals. The comment by a member of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs about Lithuania could apply to any of the three states. "On the one hand, Lithuania fears a resurgent Russia while on the other being aware of the absence of an effective security architecture for the region. It is therefore not surprising that in this atmosphere of drift, Lithuania clings to the most visible symbol of support, and that it considers NATO membership as a crucial assurance against the unknown."[75] As far as the Baltic states are concerned, NATO membership is the only realistic method of ensuring the security of their territory from Russian aggression. As Gerhard Wettig wrote, "the only hope that Baltic security can be maintained lies in Moscow's being dissuaded by self-restraint and/or Western, particularly US, security guarantees from extending its power to the three countries."[76] For these reasons, the governments of the Baltic states have made all possible attempts to ally themselves with the West and have made it clear that they would like to join NATO.

C. BALTIC ACTIONS CONCERNING NATO EXPANSION

With the inception of the NACC by the alliance, the Baltic states began to make use of NATO assistance on defense planning, building of military structures, and civil-military relations. After the 12 December 1993 Russian parliamentary elections and the victory of the nationalist parties, specifically Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party, the Baltic leaders felt a need to redouble their efforts to create ties to the West. In response to the

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74 Haab, "Estonia and Europe: Security and Defence," p. 51.

75 Eitvydas Bajarunas, "Lithuania's Security Dilemma," Chaillot Paper No. 19 (Paris, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1995), p. 25.

76 Gerhard Wettig, "Post-Soviet Central Europe in International Security," European Security, Autumn 1994, p. 475.

election, on 16 December 1993, the Presidents of all three states issued a joint statement in which NATO was identified as "being the main prospective guarantor of our security." They further stated a "desire to deepen cooperation with NATO," as a step "towards our countries' participation in Europe's evolving security structures."[77]

Once the PfP was officially announced by the NAC, the Baltic leaders enthusiastically supported it, unlike some of the other Eastern European leaders. It was seen as a way towards membership within the alliance, and all three states were enrolled in the program within a few weeks. The Baltic states seemed more positive towards the PfP than many other states. This is partially because the Baltic states, unlike the Visegrad states, did not have developed armed forces that they felt would be needed for full membership in NATO, and more importantly, the PfP proposal "indicates that NATO has not made a clear distinction in Central Europe between countries which can and countries which cannot join the Alliance."[78] In other words, the Baltics might still have a chance of entering NATO if they were active in the PfP.

To this end, the idea for a Baltic peacekeeping battalion, which had been under discussion for some time, was proposed in February 1994 at a meeting of the Baltic Defense Ministers. The unit was initially trained with the assistance of Denmark, and two platoons of Lithuanian peace keepers were attached to a Danish battalion with the UNPROFOR in Croatia.[79] On 11 September 1994, the battalion was officially formed, with its headquarters in Latvia and each Baltic state supplying a company of soldiers. Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden funded the training and maintenance of the battalion, and it was expected to be ready for service with the UN by November 1995.[80]

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77 Statement by the Baltic Presidents Regarding NATO, Baltic News Service, 16 December 1993, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-241, 17 December 1993, p. 40.

78 Ilmars Viksne, Latvia and Europe's Security Structures, Chaillot Papers No. 19 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1995), p. 68.

79 Eitvydas Bajarunas, Lithuania's Security Dilemma, Chaillot Papers No. 19 (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1995), p. 22.

Throughout 1994, the governments of the Baltic states continued to stress their desire for accession into NATO. A statement issued at the Foreign Ministers conference in March "emphasized [that] their countries desire to eventually become full-fledged members,"[81] while the Prime Ministers, in June, reaffirmed a desire for closer relations, "paving the way for the active and interested partners to play an important role in the evolutionary process of the expansion of NATO."[82] The disagreements over citizenship laws and troop withdrawals, and the hardening of Moscow's opposition to NATO expansion, made the Baltic leaders more anxious to receive some sort of a security pledge from the alliance. As NATO lost credit for failing to act in Bosnia, "it was felt to be even more essential to be a member of the club given the increasingly obvious fact that those who did not belong to it could not count on any protection."[83]

Though the Baltic governments desperately wanted to enter NATO, they did at least realize that they were probably not going to be part of the first group of states to enter the alliance. The Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas commented while in the Czech Republic, "we know that the Czech Republic is several steps ahead of us. We can make use of your experience and take the well-tried path. I know we are heading in the same direction, but we will try not to lag too far behind."[84] This appreciation for their probable position in the second tier of nations to be admitted could not be of much comfort, especially considering the threats coming out of Russia. As Estonian Prime Minister Tilt Vaki diplomatically noted in March 1995, Estonia "has reasons to worry about its security--some Russian politicians aspiring to high office have an aggressive attitude towards the

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80 "Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion Agreement Signed," Riga Radio, 11 September 1994, cited in FBIS-SOV-94-176, 12 September 1994, p. 3-4.

81 Joint Statement of Baltic Foreign Ministers, Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Service, 23 March 1994, cited in FBIS-SOV-94-057, 24 March 1994, p. 1-2.

82 Joint Communiqué of Baltic Prime Ministers, Current Latvia Information Bulletin, 20 June 1994, cited by FBIS-SOV-94-120, 22 June 1994, p. 1.

83 Wettig, "Post-Soviet Central Europe in International Security," p. 479.

84 James Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, McNair Paper No. 40 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1995), p. 91.

Baltic countries."[85] The policy of the Baltic governments is to ensure that they are given the same consideration for membership as the other Central European states.

The Baltic leaders feel that it is imperative to ensure that NATO leaders do not put them in a category for membership separate from the Visegrad states. Brazauskas's speech before the WEU Parliamentary Assembly in June 1995 clearly stated this position. "Just like the other Central European states Lithuania cannot ensure its security by itself," and if the Baltic states were "separated from the other Central and Eastern European states in the context of their relations with the EU, WEU, and NATO, that would be a misfortune for both, the Baltic States and the West."[86] This policy saw some success when the Study on NATO Enlargement, which states that all prospective members will be treated equally, was released in September 1995. The governments of the Baltic states were encouraged by this document. A Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement, which was typical of the response by all three governments, "welcomes the plan for the development of NATO" which places "all countries interested in NATO membership on an equal footing and strengthens security for Europe as a whole."[87]

Recent Russian threats of military action in the Baltic states if they were to join NATO have increased the fear of a possible abandonment by the West. Many leaders in the region feel that these threats are aimed mainly at NATO and the West, in an attempt to reduce their willingness to give security guarantees to the Baltic states. As the Lithuanian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Albinas Jansuka, stated, "this is being done with the purpose of impressing the West that the Baltic states are within the sphere of Russia's special interests...and that further steps toward sovereignty on the part of the Baltic states might lead to a nuclear catastrophe."[88]

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85 Aleksei Toom, "Results of Elections in Estonia," Kommersant-Dally, 7 March 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 10, 1995, p. 14.

86 "Lithuanian President Brazauskas Addresses WEU," Baltic News Service, 22 June 1995, cited in FBIS-WEU-95-121, 22 June 1995.

87 "Foreign Ministry Welcomes NATO Document," Baltic News Service, 2 October 1995, cited in FBIS-SOV-95-191, 2 October 1995.

Despite the Russian demands that the Baltic states remain a neutral buffer for Russia, the Baltic states remain dedicated to the goal of eventual inclusion in the Atlantic Alliance. As Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis told ambassadors from NATO countries, "Latvia cannot be a neutral state in the modern world, taking into account the lessons of the past and the current geopolitical situation."[89] The Baltic leaders remain uneasy about the sincerity of Western promises of support in the face of serious Russian opposition and, at every opportunity, try to remind the West that only as members of NATO can they ensure their security. During NATO Secretary General Javier Solana's self-described "reconnaissance trip" to the Baltic states in April 1996, Estonian President Lennart Meri told him that "NATO is a security priority with no alternative,"[90] while the Foreign Minister, Siim Kallas, said that "NATO is now the only effective system and all projects should be considered in the context of cooperation with the alliance."[91] The Latvian Foreign Minister, Valdis Birkavs, discussing his meeting with Solana, went on to say that "it is completely clear that the only true security guarantee is full membership in NATO."[92] This theme has been repeated by members of the Baltic governments whenever and wherever they have the opportunity. The most recent round of requests for security guarantees from NATO was set off by the results of the Vienna conference to review the CFE Treaty, which were announced in June 1996. This conference produced an agreement that would extend Russia's deadline for compliance to the treaty until 1999 and exempt Russia's Pskov Oblast, which is bordered by Estonia and Latvia, from the treaty's "flank

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88 Albinas Jansuka, cited in "Foreign Ministry Official on Russia's NATO Threat," Baltic News Service, 3 October 1995, cited in FBIS-SOV-95-193, 3 October 1995.

89 Guntis Ulmanis, cited in "Latvia Cannot Remain Neutral," Moscow INTERFAX, 12 March 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-052, 12 March 1996

90 Lennart Meri, cited in "Meri, Solana Comment on NATO Enlargement," Eesti Postimees, 17 April 1996, p. 1, cited in FBSI-SOV-96-075, 17 April 1996.

91 Siim Kallas, cited in "NATO Viewed as Sole Reliable Security System," Moscow INTERFAX, 17 April 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-077, 17 April 1996.

92 Valdis Birkavs, cited in "Birkavs Interviewed on Security," Radio Riga, 22 April 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-080, 22 April 1996.

limits." With the prospect of increased Russian military strength on their borders, Estonia and Latvia immediatly began to ask for Western security guarantees.[93] In addition to the rhetoric, the Baltic states are taking concrete steps to create and strengthen their ties with NATO and the West.

An example of this is the use of the Baltic peacekeeping battalion (BALTBAT) with the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. By participating in these types of broad-based actions, the Baltic states prove that they are "both 'producers' as well as 'consumers' of security."[94] Currently, the BALTBAT is acting in conjunction with battalions from the Nordic countries, but, by the end of 1996, the unit will be able to participate independently in its assigned missions. The Baltic states are making plans to form a second battalion that will enable the peacekeepers to undertake larger missions or rotate units and conduct long-term operations.[95] In April 1996, the first casualty in the BALTBAT, a Lithuanian officer, confirmed the dedication of the Baltic states to support NATO and European security in general. After the death, the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry stated that "Lithuania will keep its international commitments on maintaining peace under the aegis of NATO." The communiqué added that the death was a "symbolic confirmation of the integrity and indivisibility of European security,"[96] a statement that was meant to apply to the Baltic states, as well as to Bosnia. Other examples of Baltic commitment include active participation in multilateral PfP exercises and training programs and in efforts to create a NATO-compatible airspace control system.

A final action that will increase the attractiveness of the Baltic states as possible members of NATO is increased joint defense efforts. As Ronald Asmus and Robert Nurick, senior analysts at the RAND Corporation, wrote, "in political terms it is important for the

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93 Susan Caskie, "More Weapons on Baltic Borders," Transition, 12 July 1996, p. 67.

94 Asmus and Nurick, "NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States," p. 131.

95 "Baltic Chiefs of Staff Discuss Future of BALTBAT," Vilnius ELTA, 13 March 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-051, 13 March 1996.

96 "Vilnius to Keep Lithuanian Peacekeepers in Bosnia," Moscow INTERFAX, 19 April 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-080, 19 April 1996.

Baltic states to show that they are seriously committed to defence and that they are not 'free riders'."[97] Due to divergent foreign and defense policies, a defense union for the three states has been an elusive goal. Many leaders in the three countries realize that a Baltic defense alliance is needed to positively influence NATO, as well as to increase regional deterrence against a revisionist Russia. The Baltic Assembly, a consultative body of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian parliaments, declared at both its 1995 and 1996 annual meetings that a military union was necessary. The chairman of the Assembly's presidium went on to say that a defense union "is not an alternative to the Baltic countries' admission to NATO. On the contrary, it is likely to prepare our countries for membership in this organization."[98]

Though the need for a military alliance may be recognized, movements to create such an organization have progressed slowly. In February 1995, a formal Agreement on Cooperation in the Fields of Defense and Military Relations, which established specific areas where cooperation would be undertaken, was signed by the Defense Ministers of all three states. With this agreement, joint meetings at all levels of the three defense organizations have occurred and joint projects have been developed. The most significant advances have been in the areas of naval interoperability, communications and intelligence, and the development of a joint air-surveillance system.[99] At a recent meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian armies, plans were made to create joint military units that would participate in PfP exercises and work on restructuring the logistics system and legal codes of the Baltic armies to meet NATO standards.[100] These efforts were given further impetus by American Secretary of Defense William Perry's September 1996 statement that the Baltic states were "not yet ready" for NATO membership. Reacting to

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97 Asmus and Nurick, "NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States," p. 131.

98 "Baltic Assembly Supports Defense Union," Moscow INTERFAX, 11 April 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-072, 11 April 1996.

99 Juris Dalbins, "Baltic Cooperation: The Key to Wider Security," NATO Review, January 1996, p. 10.

100 "Baltic Chiefs of Staff Discuss Future of BALTBAT," Vilnius ELTA, 13 March 1996.

this assessment, the three Baltic presidents issued a joint statement declaring that they would do whatever might be necessary to bring their armed forces up to NATO standards.[101]

The governments of the Baltic states are slowly but steadily progressing towards a defensive alliance between the three states. During the first period of Baltic independence, such an alliance proved impossible to create, but the memory of the consequences has given increased impetus to the leaders of today. The creation of a solid military alliance would certainly make the "indefensible" Baltic states more attractive to the West and increase their chances of NATO membership. However, the lack of a defensive alliance is not the only weakness the Baltic states have in meeting NATO expectations.

D. BALTIC PROBLEMS IN MEETING NATO REQUIREMENTS

The Baltic states do not meet all the criteria NATO promulgated in its Study on NATO Enlargement. The most significant problem is the requirement for the "resolution of ethnic disputes [and] external territorial disputes including irredentist claims."[102] Other areas where the Baltic states do not yet measure up to NATO standards are military interoperability and, to a limited extent, economic and political reforms.

Minority issues are critical for the Baltic states. The Atlantic Alliance is reluctant to take in new members with minority disputes, and it is especially hesitant when those disputes involve Russia and Russians. Since independence, the three states have used different options in dealing with their Russian minorities. Estonia and Latvia, where Soviet-era immigration came dangerously close to overwhelming the local population, have approved legislation that restricts the citizenship and political rights of non-Baltic residents. Lithuania, with its clear local majority, has given full citizenship and political rights to all its residents regardless of ethnic origin. It must be noted that none of the Baltic states has taken any actions that restrict the human rights of any of its residents. The actions taken by

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101 Associated Press, "Perry Says Baltics to Wait," Washington Post, 28 September 1996, p. A21, and Associated Press, "Baltics Look Toward NATO," Washington Post, 29 September 1996, p. A30.

102 Study on NATO Enlargement, NATO Press Service, Brussels, September 1995, Para. 72.

the three states have had a direct effect on their individual relations with Russia, especially concerning the removal of Russian troops from former Soviet bases.

The actions taken by the three Baltic States on the question of citizenship for the Russian minority reflect the different situations of the three countries. The goal of all three states after independence was to create a government consisting of a significant majority of the titular nationality. None of the countries was willing to accept a divided or weak government that Russia could exploit. The worst fear of the Baltic peoples was giving the Russians an opportunity to return. The Lithuanians started with a comfortable majority (80%), and their minority population was split into two roughly equal Polish and Russian minorities that were not willing to join in opposition to the Lithuanians. With this stable power base, the Lithuanian government was in a position to be generous with citizenship and political rights. The Estonians and Latvians did not start with a comfortable majority (62% and 52%) and faced a large ethnic Russian minority (30% and 34%), so they felt it necessary to exclude the Russian minority from participation in the government.[103] Both states did this by binding citizenship eligibility to citizenship prior to the Second World War. Estonia, with its larger majority, was willing to use June 1941, a year after annexation, while Latvia, with a tiny majority, used June 1940 for the citizenship cut-off dates. Estonia excluded the Russian minority from the first national elections in September 1992 by creating a long naturalization process that could not be completed prior to the elections. Latvia simply refused to start the naturalization process until after the first national elections in June 1993.[104] In this way, both states were able to create governments controlled almost entirely by the titular nationalities.

Once in firm control, the Estonian and Latvian governments were willing to submit to European and Russian pressure to loosen their stringent citizenship requirements. Both states requested and received guidance from the Council of Europe and the OSCE, which

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103 Klatt, "Russians in the Near-Abroad," p. 35.

104 Dzintra Bungs, Saulius Girnius, and Riina Kionka, "Citizenship Legislation in the Baltic States," RFE/RL Research Reports, 18 December 1992, p. 38.

was later incorporated in updated naturalization legislation.[105] The governments, remembering how close their nations came to being eradicated, were not willing to ease the strict language requirements or allow dual citizenship for ethnic Russians, despite Russian demands. Relations between Russia and the two states have been poor as Russia claims that "discrimination against Russians" and "mass-scale violations of human rights" exist in Estonia and Latvia,[106] while the two states complain about excessive Russian interference in their internal affairs. The leaders of Estonia and Latvia argue that their citizenship laws are no more strict than those of most European states; a claim that most outside observers find to be valid. Even so, the strong Russian accusations and threats will continue to cast doubts on the eligibility of the Baltic states for NATO membership until a mutually agreeable solution can be found.

A second major issue that requires a solution before NATO membership would be possible is the Estonian border dispute with Russia. After independence, Estonia claimed that the Estonian-Russian border should be as it was demarcated in the 1920 Treaty of Tartu between Estonia and the Soviet Union. After the forced annexation in 1940, the Soviet Union under Stalin "adjusted" the border to the west, to the position it is today. This is the border that Russia wishes to maintain. The disputed area of 2300 square kilometers between the two borders is primarily populated by Russians (83%). Estonia maintained its claim to the territory during border negotiations until November 1995.[107] Once the Estonian government realized that it would never see the land returned and that the continuing dispute would undermine its chances for NATO membership, the claim was dropped. The border negotiations have not yet resulted in a treaty, as there are still a large

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105 Saulius Girnius, "Relations Between the Baltic States and Russia," RFE/RL Research Reports, 26 August 1994, p. 31.

106 Gennady Seleznev, Chairman of the Duma, cited in "State Duma Chairman on Ties with Baltic States," Moscow INTERFAX, 5 April 1996, cited in FBIS-SOV-96-068, 5 April 1996.

107 Dmitriy Gorostayev, "Russo-Estonian Border Talks Discussed," Moscow Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 22 November 1995, p. 4, cited in FBIS-SOV-95-249, 22 November 1995.

number of small issues to be agreed upon. A similar situation occurred between Latvia and Russia, but the Latvian government formally accepted the current border as official soon after independence. Interestingly, while the Estonians were pressing their claim, the Russians were threatening to make a claim against Lithuania for the Vilnius region that was ceded by the Soviet Union in 1939 after the destruction of Poland.

The issue of military interoperability with NATO is one that bedevils all of the prospective members of the alliance. In fact it could even be said that some of the current members of the alliance are not fully interoperable. The high cost and long time period needed to restructure a state's military forces to meet standing NATO requirements make this a difficult task. In a way, the Baltic states were lucky that they were left with virtually no established military forces after independence from the Soviet Union. They had the opportunity to build a NATO-compatible military from the very beginning. This process has been started, and the governments of the Baltic states are making decisions with NATO requirements in mind. Interaction with NATO forces in PfP exercises and IFOR is helping this process, and one can expect that these activities will continue in the future. Despite this fact, it will be a long time before Baltic military forces are fully NATO-interoperable.

In the case of political and economic reforms, the Baltic states have progressed very rapidly towards Western European standards. According to Freedom House, as reported in the 1995 edition of Nations in Transit, the Baltic states were each considered to be "Free" states. Out of all the states of the former Soviet Union and Central Europe, this ranking, based on individual political rights and civil liberties, was given only to the Visegrad Four states, Bulgaria, and the Baltic states. Significantly, the Baltic states earned this ranking despite problems with citizenship legislation for the Baltic Russians. The report described all three states as democracies based on multi-party elections with established constitutions and "free and fair" elections. Freedom House's main complaint with the Baltic states was on the issue of citizenship legislation in Estonia and Latvia, and the level of political influence in the Lithuanian judiciary. Economic reforms have been making progress in all three states, with Estonia slightly ahead of Latvia and Lithuania trailing further behind. Still, they have a long way to go before they can be considered true free-market economies. As of 1995, Estonia had just over 50% of its GDP produced by the private sector, while

Latvia was at 45% and Lithuania was at 30%. All three states have over half of their agricultural land in private hands with Lithuania at 99% and Estonia at 93%. Privatization legislation exists in the three states and is making steady progress towards reforming the economies of the three states.[108] Considering this information, it would be reasonable to say that the Baltic states are very close to meeting the NATO requirements for political and economic reforms.

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108 All information taken from the Introduction, Explanatory Notes, and Country Reports for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, Nations in Transit: Civil Society, Democracy, and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States (United States of America: Freedom House, 1995).

III. THE UNITED STATES AND NATO EXPANSION

To render it agreeable to good policy, three things are requisite. First, that the necessity of the times requires it; secondly, that it be not the probable source of greater evils than those it pretends to remedy; and lastly, that it have a probability of success.

Alexander Hamilton, 15 December 1774

A. AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN NATO

NATO is an alliance of sixteen sovereign states, guided by policies that must be agreed upon by the unanimous decision of all members. On paper, all signatories to the North Atlantic Treaty are equals. In reality, the United States is the undisputed leader of the alliance and, because of its unique position, has been responsible for NATO's long-term success. The American leadership position is a result of many factors. The United States, due to its size and physical separation from Europe, can act as an "impartial judge" regarding intra-European disputes. Also, the United States stations a large conventional military force in Europe and provides a "nuclear umbrella," both of which give it greater influence in NATO. America's unique position did not disappear with the end of the Cold War, and since then numerous incidents have revealed the continuing importance of American leadership in NATO.

The members of the alliance fall into three categories: the superpower, the United States; the great powers, which are limited to France, Germany, and the United Kingdom; and the lesser powers, which include Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the others. An alliance without the United States would probably have been unstable due to the rivalries between the great powers and the lesser powers' fear of domination by the great powers, as reflected by centuries of European history. The solidarity shown by the NATO members for over forty years, in spite of active Soviet attempts at de-stabilization, is a "product of the strong leadership shown by the United States." Richard Kugler writes, "had the alliance lacked strong American leadership, it would have fallen victim to the inability of many smaller nations to form a common front, and it would have been left vulnerable to the

Soviet divide and conquer tactics."[109] During the Cold War, the Europeans were willing to follow American leadership, even if it wounded their pride, as it was the safest and most stable course of action. Josef Joffe's comment very accurately describes the situation:

> Let us generalize the argument: deep in their hearts, all Europeans dread the "re-nationalization" of their defenses. The Atlantic Alliance has spared the Europeans the need for autonomous defense policies, one of the most powerful causes of conflict and war. They know that non-autonomy, the integration of their defense policy under a powerful outsider, provided the benign stage on which they could forget their ancient rivalries and link hands in economic and political community. And deep in their hearts, the Europeans suspect that they may not live as harmoniously without their big brother across the sea.[110]

The situation continues to this day. Despite the progress towards a "united Europe," there remain many fundamental differences between the European states, which have never been suppressed, except under the leadership of the United States. As W.R. Smyser writes, "it is very difficult for the European Union to make political decisions because such decisions require either unanimity or an overwhelming majority in which the major powers fully participate."[111] The need for American leadership may not last forever, but it is still there and will be for the foreseeable future.

The large deployment of American troops to Europe gives the United States greater influence over NATO decision making. These soldiers are welcomed by the Europeans and "continue to guarantee Europe's security from external and internal sources of instability."[112] They add credibility to the American commitment and give the United States a significant military presence throughout most of Western Europe. Additionally, as Paul Gebhard believes, another manifestation of American leadership is the appointment of "US

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109 Richard Kugler, Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War (Santa Monica: RAND, 1993), p. 483.

110 Josef Joffe, "Is There Life After Victory?" The National Interest, Fall 1995, p. 25.

111 W.R. Smyser, The Europe of Berlin (Gutersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 1995), p. 26.

112 Paul Gebhard, The United States and European Security, Adelphi Paper No. 286 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, February 1994), p. 67.

officers in the two top military positions in NATO, SACEUR and SACLANT. Although political leadership does not require or imply military leadership, military leadership does imply political leadership."[113] The presence of significant numbers of American soldiers in Europe will continue to be a source of influence for the United States in NATO.

In addition to conventional forces, the United States gains influence in NATO from its nuclear forces. The large American strategic nuclear arsenal provides a "nuclear umbrella" for the members of NATO. During the Cold War, "U.S. nuclear commitments were the backbone of deterrence,"[114] and today, despite the reduced East-West tensions, are still needed as a deterrent against the robust Russian nuclear arsenal. "The clearest area of functional responsibility," writes W.R. Smyser, "for the Americans is that of keeper of the global nuclear balance and keeper of the global nuclear stability."[115] The extended deterrence that the United States provides to the other members of the alliance gives it increased influence in the NATO decision making process. It is difficult to imagine any issue of contention so divisive that the other members of the alliance would be willing to risk losing American conventional and nuclear security guarantees by voting against the United States. This would also apply to the decision to expand the alliance. It is doubtful that any member would risk rupturing alliance solidarity to stop expansion, if the United States pressed to expand the alliance.

Since the end of the Cold War, a number of events have shown that American leadership is still a critical element of the alliance decision making process. As the Cold War came to an end, the question of German unification became a major concern. "At that time, it was widely thought that the Soviet Union would never accept a unified Germany,"[116] and Germany's European allies also hesitated at the thought of a unified and powerful Germany. As British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wrote in her memoirs,

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113 Ibid., p. 57.

114 Kugler, Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War, p. 484.

115 Smyser, The Europe of Berlin, p. 28.

> ...although NATO had traditionally made statements supporting Germany's aspiration to be reunited, in practice we were rather apprehensive. Nor was I speaking for myself alone--I had discussed it with at least one other western leader, meaning President Mitterrand. Mr. Gorbachev confirmed that the Soviet Union did not want German reunification either. This reinforced me in my resolve to slow up the already heady pace of development.[117]

Despite the opposition, President Bush pushed for unification and was successful, all the while controlling the entire process to ensure that European security would not be upset. Josef Joffe described the situation quite musically,

> By moving out in front, Washington did what should come naturally to the sole remaining superpower. By forcing the pace, Bush grabbed hold of the baton; by siding with Kohl, he tightened the bond with the soon-to-be number one power in Europe; and by securing both Bonn and the baton, the United States clinched control over the Western orchestra. Even à deux, France and Britain were too weak to impose a dissonant melody, and since Bonn could rely only on Washington, the United States acquired ample leverage over Germany to prevent it from playing solo in those heady but treacherous days.[118]

The successful and peaceful re-unification of the two Germanys was concluded with American leadership as a necessary element. Coincidentally, many of the arguments about Soviet opposition to German unification are similar to arguments against NATO expansion. It would appear that NATO, united by strong American leadership, can prevail over harsh Russian objections--at least in some circumstances.

A second example of a strong American leadership initiative influencing the course of action of the NATO allies is the Gulf War. Within a few days of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, President Bush had assembled a coalition with virtually all the Western European states contributing combat forces or other types of assistance. The victory was in many

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116 John Hillen, Getting NATO Back to Basics, Backgrounder No. 1067 (Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, 7 February 1996), p. 12.

117 Margaret Thatcher, The Downing Street Years (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 792.

118 Josef Joffe, "Putting Germany Back Together," Foreign Affairs, January/February 1996, p. 161.

ways "a byproduct of the efforts NATO had made over the past years to prepare for conventional war in Central Europe."[119] About the position of American leadership, Edward Foster wrote, "America's diplomatic and military pre-eminence was confirmed by the brief conflict, as indeed was Europe's relative weakness."[120] The victory of the American-led coalition in the sands of Iraq stood in stark contrast to the situation of the European-led coalition in the mountains of Bosnia until late 1995.

The United States did not take part in the initial response to the crisis in Bosnia. The Americans did not wish to get involved, and the Europeans wanted them to stay out, as this was seen as a good test of European unity. "It is a matter of bitter record that this crisis exposed the Europeans' real limitations."[121] Jane Sharp comments that, "despite the rhetoric about developing common foreign, security, and defense policies, the major European powers were incapable of reaching agreement on who was to blame, about whether or when to recognize successor states, or about what practical steps to take to end the slaughter."[122] She goes on to say that "the lack of U.S. leadership exacerbated inter-European bickering, which prevented any useful WEU or NATO actions...."[123] President Clinton's proposed "lift and strike" policy probably did not help the Europeans' situation, but American actions can only be partly responsible for the mission's failure.

Once the Americans decided to become more actively involved in Bosnia, the situation began to change and unified action was possible. The Dayton accords, pushed through by strong American leadership, "are Bosnia's best hope for peace," wrote Michael Williams, especially given "the commitment by the United States to play the major role in

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119 Kugler, Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War, p. 500.

120 Edward Foster, NATO's Military in the Age of Crisis Management (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1995), p. 11.

121 Ibid.

122 Jane Sharp, "What Future Role of the United States in European Security," in Thomas Marshall, ed., European Security and the U.S. Role: 1990' and Beyond , Report of the CNSN-IFRI Workshop, 4-5 February 1993, Paris, France, p. 109.

123 Ibid., p. 109-10.

the implementation force."[124] Though the crisis in Bosnia is far from over, it was not until the United States became involved and began to take the initiative that any concerted action took place. This, writes Roger Cohen, "is the harsh lesson of four years of war in the Balkans. America is a European power--not just a member of NATO, but its cornerstone; any attempt to disregard that fact amounts to an invitation to disaster."[125] The United States continues to play its key role as the unofficial leader of NATO. From the beginning of the Cold War to today, American initiative has been the driving force behind the tough decisions in NATO. This also applies to the issue of NATO expansion.

The first few "baby-steps" towards expansion have come about primarily as a result of American action. The initial outreach to the Central European states was the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council , "invented in a joint U.S.-German initiative."[126] Later, the Clinton administration pressed for NATO adoption of the Partnership for Peace program. The PfP, wrote Catherine Kelleher, "largely an American invention, was first floated by Secretary of Defense Les Aspin at the informal October 1993 meeting of NATO defense ministers...."[127] "Clearly, one of Clinton's triumphs," it was officially "launched at the January 1994 NATO summit and immediately defended against all comers...."[128] The success of these two initiatives was certainly tied to their support by confident American leadership.

In the aftermath of NATO's January 1994 statement that it remained open to new members and the creation of the PfP, active American leadership seemed to disappear. The issue of expansion was officially ignored until December 1994, when the Clinton

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124 Michael Williams, "The Best Chance for Peace in Bosnia," World Today, January 1996, p. 4.

125 Roger Cohen, "Why the Yanks Are Going. Yet Again." New York Times, 26 November 1995, Sec. 4, p. 1.

126 Elizabeth Pond, "Germany in the New Europe," Foreign Affairs, Spring 1992, p. 125.

127 Catherine Kelleher, The Future of European Security (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 95.

128 Ibid., p. 82.

administration asked the alliance to conduct a formal study of the expansion process. The Study on NATO Enlargement was completed in September 1995, but no significant action has occurred since that time, nor is any expected until 1997 at the earliest. Without strong actions by the United States, the alliance cannot move forward towards actually taking in new members.

The other members of the alliance, though technically equals in the language of the North Atlantic Treaty, do not have the ability to push for the admission of new members without active American leadership. Even the great powers of the alliance, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, cannot decisively lead the other fifteen members, all of whom agreed in principle to keep the alliance open to new members, to take action. Of the great powers only Germany strongly supports NATO expansion. The British support a limited expansion of the alliance, but would not include the Baltic states because of their border with Russia and because of the impact that the inclusion of the Baltic states would have on NATO-Russian relations.[129] According to some reports, the French envisage a larger NATO than do the British, and would include the Baltic states,[130] but the French are still not actively pressing for an immediate expansion of the alliance. Unlike the other two great powers, Germany is pushing for NATO enlargement to occur as soon as possible.

Germany, a co-sponsor of the NACC, has been an active proponent of NATO expansion from the very beginning. The German government is in favor of NATO expansion for two main reasons that are unique to the situation of Germany. The first reason is to create a solid and reliable belt of allied states to its east to serve as a shield against an unstable and possibly revisionist Russia. As the German Minister of Defense, Volker Rühe, stated in a recent speech,

> The opening of the Alliance to the East is a vital German interest. One does not have to be a strategic genius to understand this. You only have to look at the map. A situation in which Germany's eastern border is

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129 Axel Krohn, "European Security in Transition: 'NATO going East', the 'German Factor' and Security in Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea Region," European Security, Winter 1995, p. 587.

130 Theresa Hitchens and Brooks Tigner, "Bid by Baltics Divides NATO," Defense News, 22-28 April 1996, p. 1.

> the border between stability and instability in Europe is not sustainable in the long run. Germany's eastern border cannot be the eastern border of the European Union and NATO. Either we export stability or we import instability.[131]

Germany desires to see the states of Central Europe invited to join the alliance in order to push the political vacuum or "no-man's land" towards the east and away from its borders.

The second reason Germany is in favor of expanding the alliance is to repay a debt of gratitude for allied assistance in securing German democracy and economic prosperity after the Second World War. West Germany's joining of NATO in 1955 is seen as having been a key factor in protecting it from the economic chaos that is now found throughout the former "Soviet empire" and fostering its strongly democratic political system. Today, Germany feels that it should assist the states of Central Europe to achieve a similar level of democracy and a free-market economy. Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, wrote, "we Germans must remember that 40 years ago, the countries of the North Atlantic alliance granted us a credit of trust and, despite several obstacles and objections, extended a hand of partnership to us. As a result, we feel obliged to offer to the young democracies in the East the same degree of involvement that was offered to us."[132] For these two reasons, to secure their eastern border and aid the re-emerging democracies of Central Europe as they themselves were aided in the post-war period, the Germans are active proponents of NATO expansion.

Germany would like to see a rapid enlargement of the alliance in place of the string of delays that the United States has forced them to endure. As early as 1993, senior members of the German government, including Kinkel, Rühe, and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, started making strong statements in support of quickly opening the alliance to new members. In 1993, Rühe wrote, "We cannot afford to delay decisions until perfect visions

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131 Volker Rühe, "The New NATO," (Lecture presented at the John Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, Washington, D.C., 30 April 1996), cited in German Information Center, Statements and Speeches, Vol. XIX, No. 7, p. 3.

132 Klaus Kinkel, "Creating Trust Among Partners," Bonn Das Parlament, 8 September 1995, cited in FBIS-WEU-95-178, 14 September 1995, p. 15.

of Europe have been designed. The Atlantic Alliance must not become a 'closed shop'. I cannot see one good reason for denying...membership in NATO."[133] The vocal support of German leaders for expansion has been quieted to a certain extent by American pressure on Germany and NATO to slow down the expansion process. Despite these attempts by the Clinton administration to keep German policy in line with American policy, Germany has continued to press for a more rapid expansion process. As a result of American inertia, however, Germany has found itself unable to accelerate the enlargement process in any meaningful manner.

On the subject of the Baltic states, Germany appears to be less decided on a policy. Initially, Germany was for the inclusion of the Baltic states in NATO. In April 1995, Kinkel stated at a press conference in Tallinn, Estonia that, "NATO has decided to admit Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. It's only a question of time."[134] Since that time, officials of the German government have been much less adamant that the Baltic states have a place in NATO. Some analysts explain this reduced commitment to the Baltic states as a result of increased threats by Russia.[135]

One state that has not reduced its commitment to the Baltic states is Denmark. Of all the NATO allies, this is the only state that might be willing to delay NATO enlargement in general if Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are not given security guarantees. The requirement for a unanimous vote that is used in NATO decision-making can give small states, like Denmark, the opportunity to wield increased power on issues that are critical to their national interests. The Danes have strong ties with the Baltic states and feel that they should be invited to join the alliance. "Further, the Danes have a reputation for going their

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133 Volker Rühe, "Shaping Euro-Atlantic Policies: A Grand Strategy for a New Era," Survival, Summer 1993, p. 135.

134 Klaus Kinkel, Baltic News Service, 6 April 1995, cited in Saulius Girnius, "Cooperation With the Baltics Grows, But Moscow's Shadow Lingers," Transition, 9 February 1996, p. 33.

135 Girnius, "Cooperation With the Baltics Grows, But Moscow's Shadow Lingers," p. 33-34.

own way: Denmark's public in June 1992 rejected the EU's 1991 Maastricht Treaty"[136] and created an EU-wide governmental crisis. There is a real possibility that the Danish parliament could vote against the accession of new members, thereby blocking enlargement. Despite this possibility, many officials in the Danish government understand that there are valid arguments against the early inclusion of the Baltic states and that they may not be invited to join with the first group of countries. If that is the case, the Danish government will ask its NATO allies to create a strategy for their future accession to the alliance.[137]

As far as the Europeans are concerned, active American leadership in the NATO expansion debate appears to have dissipated, and the drive to expand the alliance has stalled. Senator Richard Lugar, after holding hearings on "NATO's Future" in 1995, described the European view of the situation. "They see the Clinton administration as divided and uncertain, and they harbor serious doubts about the will and ability of the United States to lead this debate. They openly note that NATO enlargement will never occur without strong U.S. leadership."[138] The strong and active leadership of the United States is necessary to continue the process of NATO expansion. No other state or coalition of states in the alliance is currently in a position to lead the NATO expansion debate. The decisions of the American leaders will strongly influence the decisions of the Atlantic Alliance. It is therefore important to examine the different views on NATO expansion in the United States.

B. AMERICAN VIEWS ON NATO ENLARGEMENT

Within the United States there has been a lively debate over the subject of NATO expansion. The obvious division would be between those who support expansion and those who do not. On each side of the debate are people with differing ideas and attitudes. An examination of the relevant opinions and their basic tenets is important to understand how they may influence the American leaders and public. Of those who condemn NATO

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136 Hitchens and Tigner, "Bid by Baltics Divides NATO," p. 50.
137 Ibid.

138 Richard Lugar, "NATO Enlargement," Media Release from Senate Subcommittee on Europe Committee on Foreign Relations hearings on "NATO's Future," 3 May 1995.

expansion, there are two main groups, the "Isolationists," and those who support the idea of "Russia first."

The "Isolationists" would see the United States give up all security commitments in Europe and concentrate on dealing with domestic problems. A proponent of this policy is Ted Galen Carpenter, who suggests four reasons to disband NATO and quit Europe. First, he would end European "free riding" on American security guarantees "that have cost the American taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars." Secondly, he would end "Western Europe's unhealthy dependent mindset on security issues," a mindset that has rendered it incapable of acting in European disputes, such as Bosnia.[139] Third, in his view, NATO expansion would be a "blueprint for war with Moscow"[140] over stakes far less important than those of the Cold War. Finally, it would entangle the United States in an Eastern Europe full of "unresolved territorial disputes; intense ethnic and religious rivalries; and fragile, unstable political systems," that are three or four centuries behind those of Western Europe.[141] In place of NATO, Carpenter proposes a European-only defense structure and limited American ties to the Western European Union (WEU).

Another "Isolationist," Owen Harries, believes that the "West" is an artificial construct, defined only by the hostile and aggressive "East". With the fear of Soviet domination gone, he doubts that the unity of the "West" can survive. On this premise, Harries argues that NATO expansion rests on a questionable base with numerous specific problems, including a failure to take legitimate Russian interests into account, the poor credibility of a post-Bosnia NATO, and the extensive costs of "peacemaking" in an unstable Eastern Europe.[142] Though not demanding the immediate disbanding of NATO, Harries

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139 Ted Galen Carpenter, Beyond NATO: Staying Out of Europe's Wars (Washington, DC: CATO Institute, 1994), p. 8-9.

140 Ibid., p. 69.

141 Ibid., p. 72-72.

142 Owen Harries, "The Collapse of 'The West'," Foreign Affairs, September/October 1993, p. 41-44.

does "believe that the time has come to alter the country's priorities in favor of domestic concerns."[143]

This isolationist tendency is based on a number of trends in public attitudes. The foremost is the desire to concentrate on domestic problems that appeared to be ignored during the Reagan and Bush Administrations. As evidence of this trend, it should be recalled that, despite President Bush's immense popularity after Operation Desert Storm, a relatively unknown Democrat from Arkansas, concentrating on domestic issues, was able to win the 1992 presidential election. The lack of confidence in the United Nations and its ability to find solutions for the crises that it responds to has made Americans skeptical of the utility of foreign interventions. The debacle in Somalia and the failures in Bosnia have done nothing but reinforce the idea that American lives should not be risked in countries where there is no vital national interest. As Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., wrote, "Dying for world order when there is no concrete threat to one's own nation is a hard argument to make."[144] This renewed isolationist spirit can be found on both sides of the political spectrum and could affect American policy towards NATO. However, the view that the United States ought to leave Europe on its own is not held by all those who oppose NATO expansion.

The liberal internationalists that support a "Russia first" policy would like to see the United States create stronger ties with Russia for three reasons: to assist that state in its progress towards democracy, to continue with arms control negotiations, and to secure assistance in responding to international crises. Concerning Russian democratization, Michael Mandelbaum argues that a "neo-containment" policy of NATO enlargement would run the risk of weakening democratic forces in Russia, and if imposed, would be seen as illegitimate by the Russians. This illegitimacy would give a revisionist Russia reason to try to undermine the fragile European order.[145] Despite his opposition to enlargement, he does

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143 Ibid., p. 52.

144 Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "Back to the Womb?: Isolationism's Renewed Threat," Foreign Affairs, July/August 1995, p.7.

145 Michael Mandelbaum, "Preserving the New Peace," Foreign Affairs, May/June 1995, p. 11-12.

see the continued need for the alliance to assure German security and ensure that Germany does not heavily arm itself, which would cause a sense of insecurity among its neighbors. A strong alliance would also maintain the US military presence and reassure the Europeans of American commitment, in case Russia were to regain its imperial ambitions.[146]

Michael Lind, another "Russia firster," would promote better relations with Russia and give the Russians a free hand in the "near abroad." He states "it is not in America's interest to back a weak, friendless Russia into a wall, by expanding NATO into a cumbersome and unnecessarily hostile coalition." In his opinion, "a traditional Russian great power with modest regional goals" is not a threat, and US-Russian relations should become one of "neither adversaries nor allies."[147] A final "Russia firster" is Catherine Kelleher, the Defense Advisor to the United States Permanent Representative to NATO, who believes that the most important aspect of American and European policy should be to promote a democratic Russia that will accept security responsibilities in Europe on a basis of cooperation with NATO. Unlike the others, she believes that NATO expansion would be able to garner some short-term gains to European security, though not very much when compared to the goal of "active Russian engagement in a transformed European security regime."[148] Besides the goal to see reform and democracy flourish, the "Russia firsters" would like to see Russia abide by current arms control agreements and continue with ongoing negotiations.

Russia is the state most capable of directly threatening the United States, and there is a great fear that NATO expansion would give nationalists in Russia justification to stop the arms control process. The current dispute over the flank limitations of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty would probably not be resolved, and it is possible that Russia might repudiate the entire treaty, claiming that the balance of power has changed so much that the treaty is no longer valid. In the field of nuclear weapons, START

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146 Ibid., p. 13.

147 Michael Lind, "Let's Appease Russia!" The New Republic, 9 & 16 January 1995, p. 31.

148 Kelleher, The Future of European Security, p. 139.

II, or provisions of it, could fall victim to nationalist leaders who feel Russia is threatened by NATO expansion. Hard-liners in Russia could claim that further nuclear disarmament is impossible in the face of NATO "aggression". The Western monitoring of current denuclearisation could be portrayed as espionage by a hostile power, and it might be sharply reduced or ended completely.[149] It is even possible that Russia could attempt to rebuild its weakened conventional forces, or if that is not feasible due to the condition of the economy, increase and re-deploy its nuclear arsenal. All of these possibilities appear to be very real to the "Russia first" group and are not considered to be worth risking for the possible security gains from NATO expansion. In testimony at a hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs concerning NATO enlargement, Fred Iklé said,

> In the context of U.S. interests in European security and NATO, the nuclear question is still the most important one.... And for the nuclear question the most important, and in the long run most promising avenue still remains for the United States to pursue a cooperative, mutually supportive relationship with Russia. As of today, this goal is more important than tidying up loose ends in Eastern Europe.[150]

It is the view of Iklé and others that the nuclear threat emanating from Russia is a much greater security concern for the United States than a continuation of the status quo in Central Europe. The "Russia firsters" would also promote better relations with Moscow to get its assistance in responding to international crises and rogue states.

With the end of the Cold War and the bi-polar world, numerous regional conflicts have resurfaced that will undoubtedly require some sort of action by the Western powers. The "Russia firsters" believe that good relations with Russia will be needed to properly respond to these regional conflicts and restore peace to the states involved. They use the Gulf War and the current situation in Bosnia as evidence that Russian diplomatic assistance and (in some cases) military support is crucial and necessary if the West desires to achieve a

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149 Michael Brown, "The Flawed Logic of NATO Expansion," Survival, Spring 1995, p. 42.

150 Fred Iklé, testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations hearing on "NATO's Future: Problems, Threats, and U.S. Interests," S. Hrg. 104-104, 27 April 1995, p. 25.

resolution to these crises. It is thought that NATO expansion would jeopardize Russian assistance in responding to regional conflicts and end the possibility of achieving any meaningful solutions.

Of even greater importance is the rise of "rogue states" that are working to obtain nuclear weapons to enhance their status and regional power. Russian aid may be critical in halting their plans to acquire nuclear weapons and in containing their aggressive intentions. As Stephen Sestanovich said about the recent Russian reactor sales to Iran, "it will be far easier to turn off Moscow's nuclear deliveries to Iran if relations improve."[151] A Russia that has good relations with the West would be much more willing to restrict the flow of both conventional weapons and nuclear material and technology. These good relations would certainly be damaged by any expansion of the Alliance.

A final area where Russian assistance might be needed is "the looming emergence of China as a military and economic colossus." A Russia oriented to the West would be needed to build an effective coalition against an aggressive China. In fact, it is possible that good relations between Russia and the West could deter China from taking risks that might make a coalition necessary.[152] All of these possible scenarios are seen by those who put "Russia first" as being much more important than the possible security gained by expanding NATO in Central Europe. In the view of these liberal internationalists, the risk of losing Russian assistance and goodwill is not justified by the addition of a few states to a Cold War alliance. The views of those who oppose NATO expansion are generally divided between those who do not want to see expansion interfere with US-Russian relations and those who would quit Europe completely.

A final element that opposes NATO expansion are the "defense hawks." These leaders "worry that additional states [within NATO] will weaken the alliance's defenses, strain the current members' shrinking military resources, and risk leaks of sensitive

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151 Stephen Sestanovich, "The Risks of Letting Russia Disengage," New York Times, 25 October 1995, p. 15.

152 Ibid.

information."[153] This relatively small group of internationalists fears that an expansion of NATO could divert scarce defense dollars from the Pentagon and add new commitments for the already underfunded and overextended American military. Senator Sam Nunn, the senior Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, captured the spirit of this argument, along with the ideas of the liberal internationalists, in the following comment: "By forcing the pace of NATO enlargement at a volatile and unpredictable moment in Russia's history, we could place ourselves in the worst of all security environments: rapidly declining defense budgets, broader responsibilities, and heightened instability."[154] These "defense hawks," though generally supportive of NATO, feel that NATO expansion could create unnecessary and unacceptable demands on the United States armed forces that could weaken American and European security in the long-run.

On the side of NATO expansion, there are also two main schools of thought, those who would emphasize the geopolitical arguments for expansion and those who would emphasize the democratization arguments for expansion. Henry Kissinger, a proponent of the geopolitical arguments, is afraid that a security vacuum will form between Germany and Russia if NATO does not expand to cover that area. This vacuum would surely invite Germany and Russia to seek security in the area through national efforts. This would in turn lead to a clash of interests that would threaten NATO's cohesion and existence. According to Kissinger, "NATO cannot long survive if the borders it protects are not threatened while it refuses to protect borders of adjoining countries that do feel threatened." He also wrote that Russia should be given a security treaty with NATO, but should not be allowed in NATO, as it would change the alliance from one of collective defense to collective security and negate its usefulness.[155]

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153 Jeremy Rosner, "NATO Enlargement's American Hurdle," Foreign Affairs, July/August 1996, pp. 9-10.

154 Sam Nunn, cited in Rosner, "NATO Enlargement's American Hurdle," p. 14.

155 Henry Kissinger, "Expand NATO Now," Washington Post, 19 December 1994, p. Op-Ed.

The NATO expansionists that believe in geopolitics and the primacy of power relations view political upheaval or a war in Central Europe as the greatest threat to the Alliance. As Gary Geipel stated, "One is left to wonder what-if not a conflict in Central Europe-would constitute an external threat to the current membership of the alliance."[156] A security vacuum between Russia and Germany, which has historically existed and precluded any lasting peace in the region, would need to be filled by the stability and security of an expanded NATO. This would be the only way to "the achievement of a true European peace." Geipel also argued that if NATO were to ignore the security vacuum to the east, it would "reveal itself to be nothing more than an insurance policy for wealthy Western Europe" and would thereby risk losing US support.[157]

Another expansionist, William Safire, calling himself a "realistic distruster," also fears that a "resurgent Russia will someday again seek to dominate or re-absorb the nations of Eastern Europe." His goal would be to expand the alliance quickly, while Russia is in no position to interfere: "if we wait until the bear regains both strength and appetite, the most vulnerable nations will never be protected--because at that time, faint hearts would see expansion as provocative." Unlike some of his contemporaries, Safire believes that the Baltic states must be invited to join NATO. If NATO accepts the "old, imperialist Soviet claims" to special consideration in the Baltic states, they will be condemned to the Russian sphere of influence, the same mistake that was made at Yalta.[158] The proponents of the geopolitical arguments believe that Western security can only be guaranteed if the border of NATO is pushed to the east. These ideas emphasize the importance of a security vacuum in Central Europe and the threat to Europe that still exists from Russia.

Strobe Talbott, who has changed from a "Russia first" position, now believes that NATO expansion is necessary for a number of reasons. He has an important point concerning the geopolitical argument for expansion. NATO is "a collective defensive pact"

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156 Gary Geipel, Foreign Policy, Fall 1995, p. 174.

157 Ibid., p. 175.

158 William Safire, "Baltics Belong in a Big NATO," New York Times, 16 January 1995, p. 17

and must prepare for uncertainty in Russia's future, including the possible abandonment of democracy and return to threatening patterns of behavior. This action by NATO may make Russia feel as though it is "still subject to a thinly disguised policy of containment," but it is prudent considering the reality of the situation.[159] Talbott's other reasons for supporting expansion are the democratization arguments. Concerning the internal development of the new members, Talbott would make "respect for democracy and international norms of behavior explicit preconditions for membership, so that enlargement of NATO would be a force for the rule of law both within Europe's new democracies and among them."[160] This goal, to support the Central European states in their attempt to adopt Western-style democracy and a free-market economy by covering them with the NATO security guarantee, is the basis for the democratization arguments for NATO expansion.

The Central European states do face genuine security threats. The Russians, their former overlords, have the potential to once again play a role in their internal politics. There is certainly mistrust and fear among the Central European states. Their new democratic governments are vulnerable to political upheavals or poor economic progress as they gain experience and their citizenry matures. NATO could, in principle, provide the security needed by these fledgling democracies, in view of the "second chance" offered by the West's victory in the Cold War. The expansion of the alliance to include these states would create the stability needed for democracy and capitalism to flourish, thereby ensuring that they would remain anchored to the West. "But if the new eastern democracies are not soon given a hope of eventual security within a broader NATO, they may come to feel rejected, to look elsewhere, or to succumb to internal reactionary forces. Efforts to create liberal democracies in the Central and East European area will then diminish, and much of the West's investment in the cold war will be squandered,"[161] writes Jeffrey Simon. The expansion of NATO is perceived to be necessary to defend the gains made by the West in

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159 Strobe Talbott, "Why NATO Should Grow," The New York Review of Books, 10 August 1995, p. 29.

160 Ibid., p. 28.

161 Jeffrey Simon, "Does Eastern Europe Belong in NATO?" Orbis, Winter 1993, p. 21.

the Cold War, these gains being freedom for democracy and a free market economy in Central Europe. It would be a terrible tragedy if after the great efforts made during over forty years of Cold War, the fruits of victory were allowed to slip out of NATO's grasp. It would be a very expensive mistake, both in "blood and treasure," to allow democracy "to fail or be crushed." As Asmus, Kugler, and Larrabee wrote, "While there are certainly costs and potential risks in expanding NATO, there are also costs and risks in remaining wedded to the status quo."[162] In the view of those who support the democratization arguments, the political and financial expense of expanding NATO is small compared to the cost of a failure of democratic and economic reforms in Central Europe.

A strong supporter of NATO expansion, William Odom, believes in the primacy of the democratization argument. For him, "a much better argument for NATO's expansion is found in its inception: the concern of its proponents with internal political and economic affairs in Western Europe." He believes that, in principle, external military security is a reason for expansion; however, "that challenge is nonexistent today."[163] Odom's testimony before a hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs concerning NATO enlargement illustrates his point.

> By establishing the Atlantic Alliance and deploying U.S. military forces in Europe, we transformed half of Europe from a set of warring states, a threat to our interests, into a set of dynamic economic and military partners. Our presence allowed age-old enemies to do what they had never been able to achieve before: cooperate economically, politically, and militarily. The result was spectacular.
>
> Our interests in Europe today are the same as in the past, only larger. The threats to them are remarkably like those in the late 1940s, internal instability and mistrust of neighboring states. And like in 1949, NATO is no less important as a means for dealing with those threats. To meet its challenge today, however, it has to be enlarged....[164]

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162 Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler, and F. Stephen Larrabee, "NATO Expansion: The Next Step," Survival, Spring 1995, p. 28.

163 William Odom, "NATO's Expansion: Why the Critics are Wrong," The National Interest, Spring 1995, p.45.

Odom views NATO's primary goal as the spread of democracy, capitalism, and Western values throughout Europe and thinks expansion is necessary to accomplish this goal. NATO's great success in transforming Western Europe can and must be repeated in Central Europe. The geopolitical and democratization arguments for expansion have their merits. However, the next question is, who should be allowed in the alliance?

The question of who would be allowed future membership in the alliance is indeed a critical one. Depending on which argument for expansion is used, non-membership would entail either de facto relegation to a Russian sphere of influence, no effective support for democratic and economic reforms, or, possibly, both. The Baltic States, which fall in the eastern part of Central Europe and share a common border with Russia and Belarus, are especially sensitive to the issue of who would be able to join NATO.

Given the two arguments for expansion, it is theoretically feasible that the Baltic States could join NATO. Using the geopolitical argument, the Baltic States would qualify for membership because they definitely fall into the area of security vacuum between Germany and Russia which NATO would want to stabilize. Using the democratization argument, the Baltic States would also qualify for membership because they have newly democratic governments that are working to install free market economies which NATO would want to assist and protect. Despite these theoretical justifications for NATO membership, not all expansionists would have the Baltic States in the Alliance.

The Baltic States' fear of "falling into what President Clinton has called a 'strategic limbo' if they are not included in the first or second phase of NATO expansion"[165] is certainly justified because many of those who adamantly support NATO expansion do not see any room for the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. William Odom believes that the Baltic States cannot be included in the expanded alliance, due to their indefensibility. Though they may have good moral arguments for joining, NATO would be "assuming too

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164 William Odom, testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations hearing on "NATO's Future: Problems, Threats, and U.S. Interests," S. Hrg. 104-104, 27 April 1995, p. 30 and 32.

165 Talbott, "Why NATO Should Grow," p. 30.

great a reach."[166] Richard Kugler thinks that an equilibrium between Russian and NATO influence would be necessary. He would allow the "Visegrad four" states into the Alliance and let Russia have influence over the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Between the two blocs would be "a band of neutral but secure countries in East Central Europe and the Balkans" that would include the Baltic States. He claims that these states would "remain free and outside Russia's orbit,"[167] but fails to explain how this would happen. Zbigniew Brzezinski would not rule out Baltic inclusion in NATO, but he would greatly delay their entry. He feels that they should be viewed "in the wider Scandinavian context," and that they currently have a status "similar to that of Finland during the recent past: formally neutral but aware of the West's enormous sympathy, to the point that any aggression against them would surely precipitate a serious international crisis."[168] Brzezinski feels this form of protection should be sufficient, unless Russia adopts an overtly threatening posture which might justify a quicker inclusion in NATO. The Baltic States would theoretically be included in the Alliance no matter which argument for expansion is used. There are, however, some realistic arguments against their entrance.

The idea of NATO expansion has its supporters and detractors. The supporters have two arguments for expansion, geopolitics and democratization, while the detractors fall into two groups, those who would build good relations with Russia and those who would leave Europe on its own. The opinions of the leaders who make American governmental policy are, of course, likely to be more influential than those of commentators and analysts, however distinguished.

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166 William Odom, "NATO's Expansion: Why the Critics are Wrong," The National Interest, Spring 1995, p. 45.

167 Richard Kugler, Toward a Dangerous World: U.S. National Security Strategy for the Coming Turbulence (RAND: Santa Monica, 1995), p. 151-2.

168 Zbigniew Brzezinski, "A Plan for Europe," Foreign Affairs, January/February 1995, p. 37.

C. THE VIEWS OF AMERICAN LEADERS

The Bush administration had a "Russia first" mentality in that its primary focus was on the traditional superpower relationship. There was no movement to expand NATO as Soviet forces left Central Europe, and the United States actually began to reduce its forces stationed in Western Europe. The Bush administration worked on issues such as the end of the Cold War, arms control (including strategic nuclear weapons, chemical and biological weapons, and the CFE Treaty), the unification of Germany, and the Gulf War. The Soviets proved to be helpful on many of these issues, and President Bush was "hopeful that such cooperation can be expanded."[169] At the same time, Bush's National Security Strategy stated that "we will encourage greater European responsibility for Europe's defense."[170] After the fall of the Soviet Union, the concern over strategic nuclear weapons and the denuclearization of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine was paramount. The administration's "Russia first" agenda, to strengthen the strategic nuclear weapons reduction programs and to support the democratization effort and economic reforms in Russia, became the top foreign policy priority.

The Clinton administration seemed to inherit this "Russia first" attitude from the Bush administration. After the "genuine entente between Moscow and Washington during 1990 and 1991", Clinton wanted to "turn the relationship into a true 'strategic partnership' or quasi-alliance."[171] The deteriorating political scene in Russia, especially after the October 1993 battle between Boris Yeltsin and his parliament, and a fear of deeper American involvement in Bosnia gave the administration reason to focus its attention on Russia and leave Europe to the Europeans. Concern for what Russia's reaction would be limited support for NATO enlargement by the administration.[172] According to Paul Wolfowitz, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy during the Bush administration,

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169 George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States, August 1991, p. 5.

170 Ibid., p. 7.

171 Philip Zelikow, "Beyond Boris Yeltsin," Foreign Affairs, January/February 1994, p. 45.

172 Kelleher, The Future of European Security, p. 81-82.

Clinton seemed "to be subordinating [his] policy toward other countries in the region to concern about how those policies will affect Yeltsin, even where American interests may be large and the effect on Yeltsin marginal." The Clinton administration was "unresponsive to the security concerns of the East Europeans" and "slipping into a dangerous and misguided policy of 'Russia only.'"[173]

By the end of 1993, increased calls for action on the NATO expansion issue resulted in a change in the Clinton administration's policy. President Clinton became a proponent of NATO expansion and claimed to have forsaken the idea of "Russia first." The first solid evidence of this policy shift was the US proposal in October 1993 of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. The official announcement of the PfP by NATO, in January 1994, was tied to the statement that NATO was open to new members. President Clinton emphasized to the Eastern European states that, "while the partnership is not NATO membership, neither is it a permanent holding room. ...the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members, but when and how."[174] One of the purposes of the PfP was to prepare prospective members for inclusion in NATO by giving them a chance to cooperate with the alliance. By conducting joint exercises, military to military exchanges, and political consultation, the PfP would begin the process of cultivating ties with those states that desired NATO membership. As Secretary of State Warren Christopher said, PfP would "pave the way for NATO's eventual expansion."[175] In supporting NATO expansion, the administration used both the geopolitical argument and the democratization argument. The new National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement claimed that,

> Expanding the Alliance will promote our interests by reducing the risk of instability or conflict in Europe's eastern half-the region where two world wars and the Cold War began. It will help assure that no part of Europe will revert to a zone of great power competition or a sphere of influence. It will build confidence, and give new democracies a powerful

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173 Paul Wolfowitz, "Clinton's First Year," Foreign Affairs, January/February 1994, p. 41.

174 William Clinton, cited in Carpenter, Beyond NATO: Staying Out of Europe's Wars, p. 3.

175 Warren Christopher, Address to the North Atlantic Council, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, 27 June 1994, p. 433.

> incentive to consolidate their reforms. And each potential member will be judged according to the strength of its democratic institutions...[176]

By claiming both arguments for expansion, while trying to avoid giving the geopolitical argument an anti-Russian tone, the administration was certain to maximize political support for its new policy. In order to make a break with the original "Russia first" policy, the administration made public statements that Russia would not influence the process of NATO expansion. Referring to Russia, Clinton stated that, "no country outside [the alliance] will be allowed to veto expansion."[177] With this shift in policy, Clinton appeared to be a strong supporter of NATO expansion.

Critics of the Clinton administration's policy towards expansion viewed the PfP as a way to delay expansion and limit negative Russian reactions. John Borawski suggested that, "PfP was deliberately intended to avoid early decisions being taken on NATO enlargement."[178] Senator Richard Lugar said that PfP "appears in the first instance to be Russian-oriented," and renamed it the "Policy for Postponement."[179] To many people, it appeared that the Clinton administration had not actually given up its "Russia first" policy but was in fact practicing it while claiming to be pro-expansion. "The Partnership for Peace is a sharp rebuff to the Central Europeans' plea for NATO membership," wrote Paul Wolfowitz. In his view, the Clinton "administration seems to have simply yielded to Russian objections to Central European membership."[180] Clinton's policies after the initiation of the PfP may lend some credibility to the critics' assertions.

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176 William Clinton, The National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, February 1995, p. 27.

177 William Clinton, President's Remarks at Plenary Session of CSCE Summit, Foreign Policy Bulletin, January-April 1995, p. 10.

178 John Borawski, "Partnership for Peace and Beyond," International Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 2, 1995, p. 234.

179 Richard Lugar, cited in Borawski, "Partnership for Peace and Beyond," p. 238.

180 Wolfowitz, "Clinton's First Year," p. 41-42.

In December 1994, eleven months after the initial declaration that NATO would accept new members, the administration asked NATO to begin a study of how enlargement should proceed. That study was to take almost a year to prepare and would then be briefed to the prospective members. As the Secretary of State described it, "the alliance began a steady, deliberate, and transparent process that will lead to NATO expansion."[181] To critics of the administration, the study was another way to delay the actual expansion. William Odom's view of the situation differed from the Secretary of State's. He said, "we have gone into a long phase of study. I think all of us from either the executive or legislative branch have a long experience of what studies mean, particularly when you do not have a clear sense of what is going to come out of the study."[182] In his view, as with many supporters of NATO expansion, the Clinton administration was using every possible method to delay the acceptance of new members while continuing to publicly state that it was in favor of expansion. Critics of the Clinton administration stated that the motivation for Clinton's supposed pro-expansionist views and his recent call to study NATO expansion was the popularity of the Republican Contract with America, which contained a pledge to accelerate NATO expansion, and the recent successes of the Republican Party in the 1994 Congressional elections. They contended that Clinton was attempting to "steal" an issue from the Republicans, while he had not really changed his personal beliefs and was still a "Russia firster."

The pro-expansionist critics of the Clinton administration were given more ammunition in December 1995, when NATO declared that 1996 would be used for consultations with prospective members over the results of the enlargement study. "This process amounts to perhaps the world's most extensive and prolonged series of membership interviews."[183] As the Clinton administration views the situation, expansion is on a "steady,

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181 Warren Christopher, "America's Leadership, America's Opportunity," Foreign Policy, Spring 1995, p. 19.

182 William Odom, testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations hearing on "NATO's Future: Problems, Threats, and U.S. Interests," S. Hrg. 104-104, 27 April 1995, p. 36.

deliberate course...not faster nor slower than we have indicated in the past."[184] Others, however, do not see the situation the same way. Many believe that NATO expansion has been put on hold for two reasons, the Russian and the American presidential elections. In the Russian elections, the "administration does not want to undercut President Boris Yeltsin" or "hand Yeltsin's nationalist and Communist opponents a new campaign issue." As for the American elections, "the general idea of expanding NATO is popular in this country. But the details of exactly how it will be done could prove considerably more troublesome."[185] The Clinton administration appears to many critics to be delaying expansion to aid democratization and economic reform in Russia-- that is, practicing "Russia first", while preaching NATO expansion because it is popular.

One critic, Peter Rodman, believes that President Clinton has not only put off admitting new members until after the election, but that he has also traded NATO expansion for Russian support in the Bosnia crisis. He claims that Clinton has "given Moscow secret assurances that, in return for its cooperation with the United States in Bosnia peacekeeping, NATO enlargement will be put 'on the back burner' for the foreseeable future."[186] This deal would remain in effect if Clinton were re-elected to a second term, according to Rodman's Russian sources. The administration's purported logic for this deal is that Russian support in Bosnia would prove that the Russians could be trusted to work within the new "European security architecture" and that NATO expansion is unnecessary.[187] Rodman's accusation is rather pointed, but there is some evidence that lends credibility to his arguments.

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183 Jim Mann, "Foes of Troop Deployment to Bosnia Not Upholding GOP Pledge to NATO," Los Angeles Times, 11 December 1995, p. A5.

184 Warren Christopher, cited in Mann, "Foes of Troop Deployment to Bosnia Not Upholding GOP Pledge to NATO," p. A5.

185 Jim Mann, "Signs Show Much of Foreign Policy Will Be on Hold Until After Election," Los Angeles Times, 22 January 1996, p. A5.

186 Peter Rodman, "Yalta in the Balkans," National Review, 25 December 1995, p. 23.

187 Peter Rodman, "Is the Iron Curtain Gone or Not?" International Herald Tribune, 17 January 1996.

As the 1996 presidential campaign began to get into full swing, Clinton continued to proclaim his support for NATO expansion. The White House press secretary, Mike McCurry, defended the pace of the expansion process with statements like, "NATO is not a country club that you go join some afternoon..."[188], and "this is a process that is going to have to be very carefully, deliberately designed, and it's likely to take some time."[189] During a White House visit by Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, Clinton stated that, "you should make no mistakes about it: NATO will expand."[190] Despite this pro-expansion rhetoric, the Clinton administration expects no concrete action towards admitting a new member to occur during 1997. McCurry stated in July 1996, that the December 1996 NAC meeting will begin "a process of evaluating over the course of the coming year how they [NATO] will answer the questions 'who' and 'when.' Its going to take some time."[191]

The three Presidents of the Baltic states met with Clinton in June 1996, but they received no firm commitments for their eventual inclusion in the alliance. They said that the administration assured them that "the first group of new members permitted to join the Western alliance since the end of the Cold war will not be the last."[192] Clinton's comments, in keeping with his position of the past two years, seemed to imply that the Baltic states may someday be invited to join the alliance, but they were very nebulous and non-committal. As the Estonian President Lennart Meri stated, in reference to American commitments, "suddenly I feel hungry, I want something more substantial to swallow."[193]

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188 "Clinton for Slow NATO Expansion," Reuters European Community Report, 4 June 1996.

189 Terence Hunt, "Clinton Reassures Poland on NATO Membership," Associated Press, 8 July 1996.

190 Ibid.

191 Ibid.

192 Carol Giacomo, "Baltic Leaders Get No Promises on NATO Role," Reuters, 26 June 1996.

The fears of the Baltic presidents were confirmed in September 1996, when Secretary of Defense William Perry announced that the Baltic states were not ready for NATO membership. In his statement, Perry declined to indicate which nations were ready for NATO membership and emphasized that though the Baltic states were "not yet ready," they may still be eligible for future NATO membership.[194]

Though the Clinton administration continues to profess its support for the expansion of the Atlantic Alliance, it has so far chosen not to show the leadership needed to bring about the timely addition of new members. Recent statements seem to be preparing the NATO allies, prospective members, and the American people for another year of study and deliberation but no real action. The Clinton administration would claim that it supports NATO expansion. All the official public documents and statements do back up this claim, but there are still doubts in many people's minds. The doubters would say that the administration has never lost its "Russia first" focus, and the constant delay regarding actual expansion does support this theory. If this is the case, it is very possible that the reason for this approach lies in the popularity of NATO expansion with the American people. "A plurality of the public (42%) and a strong majority (59%) of leaders support the expansion of NATO...."[195] The United States Congress, quick to sense the mood of the nation, has pressured the administration on the subject of NATO expansion. Such pressure may have given President Clinton motivation to cover his true policy with a more popular rhetoric.

One reason for the Clinton administration's apparent shift to a pro-expansion policy may have been the action taken by the United States Congress. In April 1994, House Resolution (H.R.) 4210, the NATO Participation Act of 1994, was sponsored by Republican Representatives Gilman and Solomon. The original bill "was to authorize the President to establish a program to assist the transition to full NATO membership of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia by January 1999."[196] A version of it

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193 Ibid.

194 Associated Press, "Perry Says Baltics to Wait," Washington Post, 28 September 1996, p. A21.

195 John Rielly, "The Public Mood at Mid-Decade," Foreign Policy, Spring 1995, p. 89.

was passed by the Senate in July 1994 but was defeated in conference with the House after the State Department recommended that it be withdrawn or widened to include Russia.[197] The bill was finally passed by the House as an amendment to another piece of legislation, H.R. 5246, on the last day of the 103rd Congress and just prior to Congressional elections. It was also passed by the Senate during the same session and was signed into law by the President in November. This bill, though sponsored by Republicans, was passed by a Democrat-controlled Congress and enjoyed wide bipartisan support, reflecting the popularity of the issue with the voters. The final law was not as strong as the original bill because the target date of January 1999 was deleted. The law stated that "the President may establish a program to assist the transition to full NATO membership," but there was no requirement for him to do so. Though the law specifically mentioned the "Visegrad four" states, it did have a provision to assist "other Partnership for Peace countries emerging from communist domination."[198] Using this clause, the Baltic States could certainly be designated to receive assistance under the program if the President so desired.

In the summer of 1994, while the Democrat-controlled Congress debated the NATO Participation Act and finally passed a watered-down version, the Republican Party was writing its "Contract With America." In the Contract, the Republican Party proposed a "National Security Restoration Act" as one of the ten bills that would be introduced in the first 100 days. This bill would focus "on adding new members to the alliance," specifically the "Visegrad four," but also other European states if they could contribute to the security of the alliance.[199] The Republican promise also contained a timetable, with a target date of 10 January 1999 (the five year anniversary of the PfP) for the first four new members to join. The Contract was adamant that new members of NATO would have to "embrace

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196 Congressional Record-House, 14 April 1994, p. H2366.

197 Borawski, "Partnership for Peace and Beyond," p.241.

198 Title II-NATO Participation Act of 1994, Congressional Record-House, 7 October 1994, p. H11382.

199 Stanely Sloan, "US Perspectives on NATO's Future," International Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 2, 1995, p. 224.

democracy, enact free market economic reforms, and place their armies under civilian control."[200] Thus, the Republicans were using the democratization arguments for expansion, though they were probably also thinking of the geopolitical arguments as well. Once again the Baltic States were not excluded, but neither were they specifically mentioned as good candidates for membership.

The Republican party took control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate in the 1994 elections, setting the stage for the next round of NATO expansion legislation. In accordance with the "Contract With America," H.R. 7, the National Security Revitalization Act of 1995, was introduced on 4 January 1995. A section of this bill, Title VI, called the NATO Expansion Act of 1995, dealt specifically with NATO expansion. Provisions of the bill called for the "Visegrad four" states to be "invited to become full NATO members not later than" 10 January 1999 and required the President to establish a program to assist those four states in the transition to NATO membership.[201] Though the President was required to assist the four specified states, he also had the option of assisting other states. The bill received "almost unanimous opposition from Democrats and loud objections from President Clinton's national security team."[202] Secretary of State Christopher testified that the United States "must not give up prematurely on the process of democratization and reform in Russia," and that "we must be very careful about trying to prematurely choose certain countries over others for NATO membership, or to set specific timetables."[203] It is reasonable to infer that the Clinton administration did not want this bill to interfere with US-Russian relations. The House Democrats tried to amend the bill to

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200 Contract With America, cited in James Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1995), p. 70.

201 H.R. 7, National Security Revitalization Act, Hearing before the House Committee on International Relations, 31 January 1995, p. 343-5.

202 Carroll Doherty and David Masci, "Sharply Divided House Panel Votes to Curb U.N. Missions," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 28 January 1995, p. 291.

203 Warren Christopher, testimony before the House International Relations Committee, 26 January 1995, cited in Foreign Policy Bulletin, January-April 1995, p. 53.

give the President discretion on whether to establish the program to aid the Central European states in the transition to NATO membership, but this was defeated in a vote that split along party lines.[204] The issue of NATO expansion had gone from a bipartisan effort to a Republican issue.

In an effort to push the bill through the House, a second, less-stringent bill with the same name, H.R. 872, was introduced on 9 February 1995. This bill was sponsored by Republican Representatives Spence, Gilman, and E. Bryant and "Southern Democrat" Representative Hayes and was meant to be something of a compromise. In this bill the deadline of 10 January 1999 for NATO membership was dropped, though the President was still required to create a program to assist the prospective members. House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt claimed that the bill still strained "to reinvent a cold war that no longer exists" and politicized NATO.[205] Despite Democratic opposition, the changes found in H.R. 872 were adopted into H.R. 7 on 15 February 1995, and H.R. 7, with a few amendments, was passed on 16 February 1995 in a vote that split along party lines. The bill moved on to the Senate where it was assumed that it would not be acted upon in its current form, and it was still targeted by a "faintly veiled veto threat by President Clinton."[206] It was referred to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and, as of October 1996, it has not yet left the Committee.

One of the final amendments to the bill is of great interest for the Baltic States. An amendment offered by Representatives Durbin and Lipinski, Democrats from Illinois, added language that gave the Baltic States greater prospects than the original bill had intended. Whereas before only the "Visegrad four" were mentioned in the "should be invited to become a full NATO member" category, the amendment added that "when any other European country emerging from communist domination is in a position to further the

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204 Pat Towell, "House Votes to Sharply Rein in U.S. Peacekeeping Expanses," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 18 February 1995, p. 538.

205 Richard Gephardt, remarks before the House of Representatives, Congressional Record, 16 February 1995, p. H1881.

206 Ibid., p. 535.

principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area, it should be invited to become a full NATO member." The amendment went on to state that the United States "should furnish appropriate assistance" to these states.[207] Though the amendment was not so strong as to require any action towards these states, it clearly implied that they were not to be shut out of the process entirely. In arguments for the amendment, the Baltic States were praised for their progress towards achieving Western-style democracy and economic reform and were specifically mentioned as "potential allies of the United States."[208] The support for the amendment was bipartisan, which can be explained by two factors: it was non-binding for the President, and it was supported by the Central and Eastern European Coalition, "which consists of those prominent organizations that represent Americans of East European lineage."[209] In the NATO Expansion Act's final form, the President was required to establish a program to assist the "Visegrad four" and was allowed, but not required, to designate other Central European states for assistance. The states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were specifically mentioned as being among those states that the President could designate for assistance.[210]

While H.R. 7 languished in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate Resolution (S.R.) 602 was introduced by Republican Senators Hank Brown and Lauch Faircloth on 23 March 1995. This bill, titled the NATO Participation Act Amendments of 1995, contained much of the language of H.R. 7, Title VI, the NATO Expansion Act of 1995. It would also require the President to create an assistance program for Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia to make the transition to full NATO

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207 Durbin Amendment to H.R. 7, Congressional Record, 16 February 1995, p. H1871.

208 Richard Durbin, remarks before the House of Representatives, Congressional Record, 16 February 1995, p. H1872.

209 Benjamin Gilman, remarks before the House of Representatives, Congressional Record, 16 February 1995, p. H1872.

210 H.R. 7, Title VI, NATO Expansion Act of 1995, as passed by the House 16 February 1995.

membership. The President was still given the option of designating "other European countries emerging from Communist domination to receive assistance under the program." A new aspect of the bill was that it asked the President to press for "observer status in the North Atlantic Council" for the prospective NATO member states receiving aid under the program. The justification in the bill for NATO enlargement was to "enhance the security of the Alliance" and to "create a stable environment needed to successfully complete the political and economic transformation envisioned by the Eastern and Central European countries." The Republicans were again using both arguments for NATO expansion. Concerning the Baltic States, the bill stated that "Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have made significant progress in preparing for NATO membership and should be given every consideration for inclusion in programs for NATO transition assistance."[211] No other states, except the "Visegrad four," were so mentioned by the bill, and one may assume that the authors of the bill view the Baltic states as a "second tier," below the "Visegrad four," but above the states of Southeastern Europe. This differentiation has had no real effect as the bill was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations and, as of October 1996, it has not emerged for a Senate vote.

In an attempt to re-invigorate the debate over NATO expansion in the Congress and spur the Clinton administration to action, nearly identical bills were introduced into the House and Senate on 4 June 1996. The bills, titled the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996, were announced during an appearance by former Solidarity leader and Polish President Lech Walesa before the Congress. The bills, which specifically identified the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion as preparing the Baltic states for the responsibilities of NATO membership, called for the United States to actively assist the emerging democracies in Central Europe so that they may qualify for NATO membership. The bills designated Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as able to receive part of the 60 million dollars appropriated for "NATO Enlargement Assistance" in FY 97. Other Central European

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211 S.R. 602, NATO Participation Act Amendments of 1995, as introduced in the Senate on 23 March 1995.

states, including the Baltic states, were also specified as being eligible for designation by the President to receive aid.[212]

The House version, H.R. 3564, sponsored by Representative Gilman, who is now the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, contained a section that discussed the forcible incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union in 1940. This section stated that it was the sense of the Congress that the Baltic states have "valid historical security concerns that must be taken into account by the US" and that they "should not be disadvantaged in seeking to join NATO by virtue of their forcible incorporation."[213] It seems that the intent of this section was to reaffirm that the Baltic states are a part of Europe and should not be assigned to a Russian sphere of influence, just because they were a part of the USSR. H.R. 3564, which was passed on 23 July 1996, by a vote of 353-55, received strong bipartisan support. A reason for this may be the non-binding nature of the bill and the fact that elections are near, and that many Democratic Representatives from the industrial Mid-West and North-East have large segments of their constituency that are of Central European descent.

The Senate version of this bill, S. 1830, has not fared as well as the House version and has joined S.R. 602 in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The bill was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, just before he resigned to campaign in the 1996 Presidential election, and eight other senior Republican Senators, such as Jesse Helms, Arlen Specter, and Mitch McConnell.[214] Despite this strong backing, the bill remains in committee with little hope of early floor debate. The only legislation concerning NATO enlargement that the Senate has recently passed is an amendment to the FY97 Defense Appropriations bill. This amendment, S.A. 4367, which passed by a vote of 97-0, requires the President to submit a report on NATO enlargement to the Congress. Democratic

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212 H.R. 3564, NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996, as passed in the House on 23 July 1996.

213 Ibid.

214 S. 1830, NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act of 1996, as introduced in the Senate on 4 June 1996.

Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia, the sponsor, has said that the report should discuss how NATO would defend the new members and the cost of expansion.[215]

Forcing the President to act on NATO expansion has certainly become a Republican desire. It would appear to be something of a priority in the Republican-controlled House, where it was a part of the "Contract With America" and acted on within weeks of the opening of the 104th Congress. The House Republican Policy Committee endorsed an immediate expansion of NATO in May 1996, saying delay would "perpetuate a power vacuum in the heart of Europe." Their statement said that NATO should "immediately expand to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. The Baltic Republics and other former Warsaw Pact states should be added at the earliest possible time." The Committee repeatedly criticized President Clinton for his slow approach to NATO expansion and said the result of the current policy would be the spreading of instability throughout Central Europe.[216]

Representative Gilman, in a review of US policy toward NATO enlargement before the House International Relations Committee, identified the issue of NATO expansion as "one of the greatest national security challenges we [the US] face" and stated that the Clinton administration had failed to act as authorized by Congress in the NATO Participation Act of 1994.[217] The theme of Gilman's address was that the House Republicans would continue to spur Clinton on towards action until such time as new members actually join NATO. The Republicans maintained their control of the House in the 1996 elections and appear to be poised to continue pressing for NATO expansion. However, the Republican majority in the House in the 105th Congress is considerably

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215 Susan Cornwell, "US Sees Senate Possibly Hindering NATO Expansion," Reuters, 14 July 1996.

216 John Diamond, "House Republicans Support Immediate NATO Expansion," Associated Press, 21 May 1996.

217 Benjamin Gilman, Statement at a Hearing on the US Policy Toward NATO Enlargement before the House International Relations Committee, 20 June 1996.

smaller than before, and this may force the Republicans to tone down their rhetoric and legislation.

The support in the Senate for a rapid NATO expansion has not been nearly so strong. The small Republican majority and the large number of moderate Republican Senators made it difficult to force through legislation that would radically change American foreign policy. The negative views regarding NATO enlargement of many well-respected moderate Senators, from both parties, have helped to slow or stop all of this legislation in the Senate. Republican Senator William Cohen of Maine commented in February 1995, "Stability is not a concept that is easy to sell. What we need is a thorough public debate, but in the United States it hasn't even begun. The answer today would be no."[218] Senator Nunn commented in June 1995, "By forcing the pace of NATO enlargement at a volatile and unpredictable moment in Russia's history, we could place ourselves in the worst of all security environments...."[219] These types of statements by moderate Senators have influenced the NATO expansion debate in the Senate. Many moderate Senators in both parties worry about the cost of expanding NATO, especially when the United States is attempting to reduce expenditures and balance the budget, and about the added commitment for the United States. These Senators have effectively worked to slow all NATO expansion legislation in the Senate. Finally, the fear of a Presidential veto, one that probably could not be overridden, has not helped the situation.

While the Republican majority in the House had been pushing the NATO expansion legislation, a combination of minority Democrats and Republicans were also introducing legislation that could affect NATO expansion. The Shays-Frank Amendment to the defense appropriations bill, introduced on 14 June 1995, by Republican Representative Christopher Shays and Democratic Representative Barney Frank, was designed to increase European burden sharing of the non-personnel costs of stationing American troops in Europe. The

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218 William Cohen, cited in Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, p. 72.

219 Sam Nunn, Speech to SACLANT conference in Norfolk, VA on 22 June 1995, cited in Congressional Record, 30 June 1995, p. S9572.

amendment would have the NATO European governments paying 75% of all non-personnel costs by 1999. If the European governments did not pay the required costs, the amendment would require 1,000 soldiers from the forces deployed to Europe to be returned to the United States per percentage point under the goal. Of the soldiers returning from Europe, half would have to leave the service, and half would be permanently reassigned within the United States.[220] This amendment enjoyed a degree of bipartisan support and was passed by the House. About one half of the House Republicans voted for the amendment while almost nine-tenths of the House Democrats voted to support it.[221] With these results, it would appear that this amendment was partly a Democratic rejection of NATO expansion and partly an opportunity to reduce the defense budget or, at least, an opportunity to go on record as supporting more equitable burden-sharing.

A similar amendment was introduced in the Senate on 4 August 1995. Amendment No. 2121, introduced by Democratic Senator Tom Harkin and Republican Senators Spencer Abraham and Olympia Snowe, would also increase European burden-sharing of the non-personnel costs. The amendments differed in that, according to the Senate version, the Europeans would have to pay 75% of the costs by 1997 and that any soldiers leaving Europe would be reassigned in the United States.[222] The amendment was tabled in the Senate by a vote of 70 to 26, with only five Republicans voting against the tabling motion.[223] As in the House, this legislation enjoyed a degree of bipartisan support, with a majority of its backers being Democrats. Taking the voting patterns for H.R. 7 into account, it would seem that the Democratic minority generally does not support NATO expansion and would favor a reduced American financial and possibly military commitment to the Alliance.

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220 Reduction of United States Military Forces in Europe, Amendment to Defense Appropriations Bill offered by Mr. Shays, Congressional Record, 14 June 1995, p. H5955-6.

221 Congressional Record, 14 June 1995, p. H5961-2.

222 Amendment No. 2121, Congressional Record, 4 August 1995, p. S11403-4.

223 Congressional Record, 4 August 1995, p. S11419.

The most recent actions by members of the Democratic minority include a pair of bills that would have the Europeans pay for all American non-personnel costs and all the costs of the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR). The first bill, H.R. 2788, introduced by Democratic Representative Barney Frank on 15 December 1995, would have the European allies pay for all American non-personnel costs by 1997, or all American forces in Europe would be returned to the United States by 1999.[224] The second bill, H.R. 2874, introduced by Democratic Representative Joseph Kennedy on 24 January 1996, would have the European allies pay for all costs associated with supporting American forces participating in the IFOR in Bosnia. However, this bill does not state that there would be any repercussions if the NATO allies failed to pay the American costs.[225] Both of these bills have been referred to the Committee on International Relations, and they have not yet been debated.

Within the House of Representatives, the Republican majority wishes to accelerate the schedule for NATO expansion, but it has not achieved any success due to inaction by the Senate. Within the Senate, moderates from both parties have slowed down the process and seem to hold the key to the passage of this legislation. The results of the 1996 elections, which saw a large number of moderates from both parties, including Sam Nunn, retire, gave the Republicans a slightly increased majority in the Senate. This change to the Senate's composition may allow for the passage of the NATO expansion bill. The fact that the Republican party maintained its control of the House in the recent elections and increased its influence in the Senate means that the strongest impediment to the House's plan would most likely be the president.

The debate during the 1996 Presidential election served to focus the positions of the leaders of both parties on the subject of NATO expansion. The issue may have become an important element of the campaign for three reasons. First, the Republicans felt that it could be used to show foreign policy incompetence within the Clinton administration. Second, the issue could be used by the Republicans to highlight the differences between the two candidates. Finally, the large number of voters of Eastern European heritage in the key

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224 H.R. 2788, as introduced in the House on 15 December 1995.

225 H.R. 2874, as introduced in the House on 24 January 1996.

"industrial mid-west" states, which both parties felt they could win, and their well-organized political organizations were concerned with the outcome of the NATO expansion debate.

The Republican presidential candidate, the former Senate Majority Leader, Robert Dole, championed a rapid NATO expansion. Jim Mann writes, "Dole, in his long career in the Senate, has established a record of championing an active role for the United States overseas."[226] As part of this active role, the Senator would see the United States "preserving alliances inherited from the Cold War and leading to create new ones where necessary."[227] He has always been in favor of America's continued involvement in Europe and even advocated a tough policy in Bosnia as far back as the Bush administration.[228] On the topic of NATO expansion, Dole said in a March 1995 speech at the Nixon Center that "Russia continues to threaten prospective NATO members over alliance expansion, thereby confirming the need to enlarge NATO sooner rather than later." He went on to say that the "Clinton Administration's misguided devotion to a 'Russia first' policy--which has turned into a 'Yeltsin first' policy--resulted in the loss of a tremendous opportunity...."[229] Throughout his time as the Senate Majority Leader, Dole was a supporter of enlarging the Atlantic Alliance.

In June 1996, Dole discussed NATO expansion as a campaign issue against Clinton. Saying that Clinton had "deferred and delayed, placing the threats of Russian nationalists before the aspirations of democrats" in Central Europe, Dole pledged to "stand firmly with the champions of democracy" and to bring the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary into NATO by 1998.[230] In addition to his recent campaign promise to expand the alliance, Dole

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226 Jim Mann, "Internationalism is Foreign to Most GOP Candidates," Los Angeles Times, 24 September 1995, p. A1.

227 Robert Dole, "Shaping America's Global Future," Foreign Policy, Spring 1995, p. 37.

228 Michael Kranish, "Bosnia Mission Splitting Republicans," Boston Globe, 5 December 1995, p. 1.

229 Robert Dole, Speech at the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom, 1 March 1995, cited in Foreign Policy Bulletin, May/June 1995, p. 34-5.

initiated a bill in the Senate, shortly before his resignation as a Senator, that would accelerate the process of NATO expansion. Despite his support for speeding up the expansion process, Dole would not include the Baltic states in the "fast track" to NATO membership. During his June 1996 meeting with the three Baltic Presidents, Dole discussed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in terms of a "second category" for expansion. As Estonian President Meri said, he received a "cautious positive answer" from the candidate, while Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis commented that "Dole was the only person who actually named names."[231] If Dole had been elected as president, he almost certainly would have accepted a law pressing for rapid NATO enlargement and might even have initiated such a process.

Pat Buchanan, a political commentator and one of Dole's strongest rivals in the fight for the Republican presidential nomination may have had some influence over the NATO expansion debate during the election. Buchanan "doesn't believe we need allies. He doesn't see much worth defending outside the 12-mile limit,"[232] claims a former colleague, Peter Rodman. According to Buchanan, "we need a new foreign policy that ends foreign aid, and pulls up all the trip wires laid down abroad to involve America's soldiers in wars that are none of America's business, and we need to demand that rich allies begin paying the full cost of their own defense."[233] Though his views appear to be "isolationist," he claims that he believes in "Americanism." As for his position on NATO, Buchanan writes it "is the time to tell the Europeans what they should have been told years ago: Defense of their continent is now their responsibility. Why must 260 million Americans defend forever 300 million Europeans from 160 million Russians mired in poverty and despair? How long must their damnable dependency endure?"[234] Buchanan would most certainly not support NATO

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230 Robert Dole, Speech at the World Affairs Council, Philadelphia, PA, 25 June 1996, cited in New York Times, 26 June 1996.

231 Giancomo, "Baltic Leaders," 26 June 1996.

232 Peter Rodman, cited in Mark Matthews "Buchanan View Has 12-mile Limit," Baltimore Sun, 29 February 1996, p. 2A.

233 Pat Buchanan, cited in Mark Matthews "Buchanan View Has 12-mile Limit," p. 2A.

expansion and would in fact "deed NATO over to the Europeans."[235] Concerning the Baltic states, he would give Russia guarantees that the United States would not arm them.[236] Buchanan's ideas certainly do not conform with recent mainstream Republican policies, but his "populist" views have found surprisingly strong support in some segments of the party and the American body politic.

Another individual that influenced the debate during the 1996 election is Republican Senator Richard Lugar. He was also a rival of Dole for the Republican presidential nomination but left the campaign early. With his strong foreign policy experience, as the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Lugar is seen as "defending the traditional internationalist view of active U.S. engagement with the world."[237] Lugar has "accused the President of virtually abdicating American leadership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization by supporting the group's eventual expansion to include nations in Eastern Europe, but never specifying how the countries would join, or trying to sell the idea to the American public."[238] He describes Clinton's Partnership for Peace as containing "inherent contradictions. It seeks to accommodate a variety of interests and, in the process, satisfies none, least of all American interests."[239] In his view, Clinton "has embraced the Russian President too unreservedly."[240] An active participant in the expansion debate,

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234 Pat Buchanan, "Bosnia Decision: Americanism vs. Isolationism," Austin American-Statesman, 1 December 1995, p. A15.

235 Pat Buchanan, cited in Mark Matthews "Buchanan View Has 12-mile Limit," p. 2A.

236 Mark Matthews, "Buchanan View Has 12-mile Limit," p. 2A.

237 Ronald Brownstein, "Foreign Policy Debate Splits GOP Candidates," Los Angeles Times, 6 March 1995, p. A8.

238 Michael Wines, "A Presidential Hopeful With a Low-Key, Serious Air," New York Times, 7 March 1995, p. A1.

239 Richard Lugar, prepared statement for "The Future of NATO" hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations, 1 February 1994, p. 13.

240 Wines, "A Presidential Hopeful With a Low-Key, Serious Air," p. A1.

Lugar has developed "Six Commandments" on enlargement. These are: One, show leadership. Two, have a clear moral and political vision. Three, start with the strongest candidates and keep the door open. Four, know the costs and commitments. Five, have a strategy for the second round of entrants. Six, realize the US need for partners beyond Europe.[241] Lugar is seen by many to be the foil to Buchanan's isolationism, and he is expected to continue to have some influence within the Republican Party.

The last few weeks of the election saw President Clinton make his first specific statements about a timeline for NATO expansion. The president, in a speech in Detroit, called for the first group of new members to be admitted to the alliance in 1999. The president, as in the past, refused to declare which states he wished to see join the alliance. White House officials initially declared that the October speech in Detroit to a crowd of "academics, elementary school children and ardent Democrats" was intended to "influence a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in December."[242] However, the speech was delivered in a region with a large Eastern European "ethnic vote", as the same officials acknowledged, and was more likely aimed at these voters, rather than the NATO foreign ministers, one of whom is the Secretary of State,who will be the president's representative at the meeting. The president's comments would seem to indicate that he is serious about expanding NATO, but the fact that he refuses to indicate which states might be eligible continues to create concern, at least in some circles, regarding the will of his administration to deal effectively with Russian opposition to NATO expansion.

The United States is still the leader of the Atlantic Alliance. Though some of the great powers, particularly Germany, are gaining greater influence, the primacy of American leadership will remain for the foreseeable future. With this in mind, it is logical to think that the policy of the American government towards NATO expansion will significantly influence the policy of NATO towards expansion. The current American government is

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241 Richard Lugar, "Lugar Stresses Continued Support of NATO Expansion," Federal Document Clearing House, Congressional Press Releases, 4 June 1996.

242 Alison Mitchell, "Clinton Urges NATO Expansion in 1999," New York Times, 23 October 1996, P. A20.

divided on the subject of expansion, with the House pressing for accelerated expansion and the Senate and the Clinton administration effectively slowing the process. Considering the influence of moderate Senators and President Clinton, with his discreet "Russia first" agenda, there is little doubt that any real action towards accepting new members to the alliance will be postponed until 1999, and perhaps later, despite the fact that the official pro-expansion rhetoric will continue. Even if the United States took the lead and pressed for expansion, there is doubt that the Baltic states would be in a position to gain early admission to the alliance. Though there is certainly support for the Baltic states within the different elements of the American government, this support would probably not be strong enough to successfully press for their early admission into NATO. The Baltic states would almost certainly be eligible for any aid that the United States may provide to prospective members--probably in the framework of Partnership for Peace--and (at least in some circles) they might be seen as a "second tier" for NATO enlargement, ahead of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Slovenia, but behind the "Visegrad four."

IV. RUSSIA AND NATO EXPANSION

I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest.

Sir Winston Churchill, 1 October 1939

Russia plays a critical role in the debate over NATO expansion. The Russian leadership's strong opposition to the enlargement of NATO has created indecision within the capitals of the United States, Germany, and the other members of the Atlantic alliance. The leaders of these states, especially the United States, must balance good relations with Russia, and the benefits that are accrued from those relations, against the probable increase in European stability and security that Central European membership in NATO would create. In the face of stiff, and often times threatening, Russian opposition, those Western leaders with a "Russia First" viewpoint are unwilling to jeopardize progress in arms control negotiations, combined international crisis response, and democratization in Russia. At the same time, pro-expansion leaders see Russia's actions as further justification for the timely enlargement of the alliance. Thus, Russian opposition has split the top leadership within the alliance and created indecision that has effectively delayed the actual enlargement of the alliance. Considering the powerful effect that Russian opposition is having on the issue of NATO expansion, it is important to understand the source of this policy of opposition and how it may change in the future.

A. REASONS FOR RUSSIAN OPPOSITION TO NATO EXPANSION

Opposition to NATO expansion into Central and Eastern Europe is one of the few issues that most elements of the Russian political elite and society in general can agree upon. Political factions from the liberal reformers to the ultra-nationalists are all concerned about NATO's planned move to the east and are especially worried about the possible inclusion of the Baltic states in the alliance. Despite this universal fear of NATO expansion, there are different thoughts on the subject. A number of reasons are given by the various political leaders for their anxiety over the growth of the Atlantic alliance. These reasons are believed singularly, or in varying combinations, by the different elements of the political

leadership and the masses. These reasons for opposition to NATO expansion include concerns about the strategic defense of Russia, fear of Russian isolation from Europe, concern for the fate of the Baltic Russians, the effect on Russia's great power status, and a desire to distract the public from the domestic situation.

A powerful source of opposition to NATO expansion is Russian anxiety about the military defense of Russian territory. Many Western observers have traditionally believed that the Russian people live in constant fear of attack by great powers on their borders. This belief is supposed to have come from the Mongol invasion and was later reinforced by Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and Hitler. Regardless of the validity of this belief, some elements of Russian society do fear that an expanded NATO would be an aggressive military organization perched on Russia's borders. As Pavel Felgengauer, a respected though often outspoken analyst, wrote, "most of Russian society views an expansion of the NATO military bloc as an infernal threat that condemns it once again to live in constant expectation of a 'big war'--a new June 22, 1941."[243] This viewpoint is rather extreme, but it is not uncommon in Russia.

Many Russians see NATO's modest post-Cold War changes towards a more capable military force for "out of area" operations as a direct threat to Russia. The recent NATO involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina is considered an example of how NATO will involve itself militarily throughout the unstable regions of Europe, which could include parts of the CIS and even Russia. Shortly after NATO's September 1995 multi-day bombing campaign against the Bosnian Serbs, Russian President Yeltsin expressed his conviction of how an expanded NATO on Russian borders would act. "The political leaders who are championing the rapid bloating of NATO should be very careful.... NATO is already showing what it is capable of. Only of bombing, and then counting the trophies, of how many are killed among the civilian population."[244] An aggressive expanded NATO on

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243 Pavel Felgengauer, "Russian General Aren't Interested in NATO Countries' Good Intentions," Sevodnya, 23 June 1995, p. 9, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 25, 1995, p. 31.

Russia's border is considered to be unacceptable to most Russians. This occurrence would not only jeopardize the safety of Russia, but it would also invalidate the enormous sacrifices made by the Russian people in the Great Patriotic War.[245] Considering the emotions that the immense suffering caused by the Second World War still evoke in Russia, this is a significant source of Russian opposition.

More tangible threats that NATO expansion in the Baltic states would create for Russian security would be the proximity of NATO forces to the Russian "heartland" and the isolation of Kaliningrad. Were the Baltic states to join NATO, Russia's psychological and demographic center would be within a short flying distance from NATO bases. The sea route to St. Petersburg and access to Europe via the Baltic Sea would be susceptible to blockade from naval bases in Estonia. Russian military planners and other leaders see this as a completely unacceptable strategic situation and have issued threats of military action to stop NATO expansion in the Baltic states. Kaliningrad *oblast*, with a population of 900,000 Russians, of whom 300,000 are military, relies on the transit of supplies through Lithuania for survival. This situation would, the Russians fear, be untenable if Lithuania were to join NATO. Russia is adamant that Kaliningrad, whose ports are the main base for the Russian Baltic Fleet, will remain a part of the Russian Federation. A Foreign Ministry press release from 1994 stated, "Kaliningrad is, was, and will be part of the Russian Federation. Any further encroachments upon Russia's sovereignty will be met by a serious rebuff."[246] Should Lithuania join NATO, Russian security would be greatly affected by the probable isolation of Kaliningrad.

A second reason for opposition to NATO expansion is the fear that Russia would become isolated from Europe. This fear is found in all elements of the Russian political elite. The liberals and reformers fear that NATO expansion would create a new partition in

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244 Boris Yeltsin, at a Kremlin news conference, on 8 September 1995, cited in Steve Erlanger, "In a New Attack on NATO, Yeltsin Raises the Specter of War," New York Times, 9 September 1995.

245 Anatol Lieven, "A New Iron Curtain," Atlantic Monthly, January 1996, p. 22.

246 Vejas Liulevicius, "As Go The Baltics, So Goes Europe," Orbis, Summer 1995, pp. 395-396.

Europe. This new "Iron Curtain" would act as a "formidable obstacle to Russia's integration in the Western community."[247] Isolation from Europe would have dire effects on Russia's progress towards democracy and free market reforms. As Anatol Lieven wrote, NATO expansion would "deal a blow of historic importance to the whole effort, intermittent since the time of Peter [the Great], to reform Russia in a Western direction."[248] Centrist politicians and observers believe that NATO expansion would force Russia out of Europe, an action which would be economically and politically dangerous for Russia. The previous Russian Defense Minister Grachev, a conservative member of Yeltsin's government, felt that it "would be unfortunate if the former Warsaw Pact states joined NATO in the near future, because this step would relegate Russia to a much more isolated position."[249] These politicians believe that NATO expansion, along with EU expansion, would squeeze Russia out of an expanded and consolidated Euro-Atlantic community.[250]

The radical nationalists take this idea of isolation to its extreme and preach about NATO's goal of encircling Russia with a hostile alliance system. Pravda reporter Vladimir Bolshakov described Russia as "a nut squeezed between pincers," with one of the pincers an expanded NATO that would include the formerly "friendly neutral" Finland and the "hostile Baltics."[251] In a later article, he proclaimed that NATO expansion was a drive to "surround Russia" and compared it to the Nazi military campaigns in Russia. Bolshakov specifically stated that the states that now desire to join NATO, and many current NATO members, like

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247 Eugene Rumer, Russian National Security and Foreign Policy in Transition (Santa Monica: RAND, 1995), p. 46.

248 Lieven, "A New Iron Curtain," p. 22.

249 Pavel Grachev, cited in Suzanne Crow, "Russian Views on an Eastward Expansion of NATO," RFE/RL Research Report, 15 October 1993, p. 22.

250 Aleksei Pushkov, "Would Expanded NATO Push Russia Out of Europe?" Moskovskiye Novosti, 1-8 October 1995, p. 11, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 39, 1995, p. 9.

251 Vladimir Bolshakov, "Russia in Bind Between NATO in West, Japan and China in East," Pravda, 9 December 1994, p. 3, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVI, No. 49, 1995, p. 12.

France, Belgium, and Italy, "fought on the Eastern front, and frequently in the SS troops, fighting under the same flags that have now become their state banners...."[252] Though these statement may seem rather far-fetched, there is an audience for them in Russia. Virtually all segments of society and the elites fear that NATO expansion would isolate Russia from Europe and thereby cause a number of crises for the Russian Federation.

A third reason for opposition to NATO expansion is concern for the fate of the ethnic Russians in the Baltic states. The Russian political elite has vocally accepted the existence of a special responsibility the Russian government has to protect the rights of ethnic Russians in the "near abroad". To ensure that Russia can protect the members of this "Russian diaspora," many elements of the Russian political elite believe that Russia must have special influence over the governments of the newly independent states. Some would even go so far as to demand that Russia have a military presence in all the former Soviet republics to enforce its policies.[253] Were the Baltic states to join NATO, the Russians would be less able to make demands on behalf of the Baltic Russians. The Russian government would find its ability to influence domestic policy within the Baltic states greatly diminished, if not completely eradicated. The Russian political elites profess to fear NATO expansion because it would put an end to their ability to protect the Baltic Russians.

A fourth source of opposition to NATO expansion is its perceived effect on Russia's status as a great power. The Russians are having a difficult time accepting the loss of superpower status that the dissolution of the Soviet Union entailed. Alexander Rutskoy described this as follows in 1991: "the Soviet Union was a great power, and its army was a mighty force, a factor of peace and stability in the world. But what happened then was a veritable disintegration of the state and of course disintegration of the army."[254] To make

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252 Vladimir Bolshakov, "Facing a 'Drive to the East'," Pravda, 7 October 1995, p. 3, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 40, 1995, p. 11.

253 Leszek Buszynski, "Russia and the West: Towards Renewed Geopolitical Rivalry?" Survival, Autumn 1995, p. 109.

254 Alexander Rutskoy, cited in Mark Smith, Pax Russica: Russia's Monroe Doctrine (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1993), p. 7.

matters worse, the simultaneous loss of territories acquired during three hundred years of imperial expansion and a virtual economic and military collapse have created doubts about Russia's claim to be a great power. To many Russians, the expansion of NATO would be an insult of historical proportions to Russia's status as a great power and the respect that it is due. Though most Russian leaders understand that NATO expansion would be a legitimate action taken by sovereign states, its effect on Russian pride would still be terrible. As Flora Lewis wrote, what is "more important is the misty definition of Russia's status, its prestige, its sense of itself as a great nation and a power to be reckoned with."[255]

The Russians argue that the Western great powers, the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, promised Russia, as a fellow great power of Europe, that NATO would never expand. They assert that the "Two-plus-Four" agreement on German unification entailed an implicit commitment by the West to consider Russia's special military and security interests in Central and Eastern Europe. The best example of this line of thinking can be found in Yeltsin's September 1993 letter to the leaders of the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France:

> I would also like to draw your attention to the following fact. It is the matter of the Treaty on the Final Settlement With Respect to Germany signed in September 1990, and particularly its stipulations banning the deployment of foreign troops in the eastern federal lander of the Federal Republic of Germany. The spirit of these stipulations rules out any possibility of a NATO expansion eastwards.[256]

The Russians believe that this treaty created a permanent "neutral zone" between NATO and Russia and feel cheated by NATO's planned expansion into this region. In reality, the treaty only restricted NATO troops from the territory of the former GDR and only while Soviet forces remained in that region.[257] Despite this fact, many Russians feel that the

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255 Flora Lewis, "Why NATO--Not the United States--Frightens Moscow," Transition, 23 February 1996, p. 51.

256 Boris Yeltsin, cited in "Yeltsin's Secret Letter on NATO Expansion," Prague Mlada Fronta Dnes, 2 December 1993, p. 6, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-231, 3 December 1993, p. 6.

257 Suzanne Crow, "Russian Views on an Eastward Expansion of NATO," RFE/RL Research Report, 15 October 1993, p. 22.

West is breaking a promise to Russia, and they are unwilling to accept the expansion of NATO.

A final reason behind the opposition to NATO expansion by the Russian political elites is the desire to distract their people from the extremely poor domestic situation with exaggerated threats from the outside world. Analyst Alex Pravda wrote, "Whether and how strongly [the political elites] voice their objections depends more on considerations of how the NATO question can serve their own domestic purposes than on substantive concerns."[258] The nationalist and communist political factions have used the opportunity that NATO expansion creates to attack the current government and its reformist policies. They have continued to declare that Yeltsin and his administration are weakening Russia, both economically and militarily, and allowing the West to absorb the states of the Warsaw Pact and even former Soviet republics. Vyacheslav Nikonov, Chairman of the Duma's Subcommittee on International Security and Arms Control, wrote that "the main force within Russia that is using anti-NATO sentiment to further its own interests is the opposition. It maintains that all Russia's troubles stem from rapprochement with the West, whose strike force is NATO."[259] The factions in the center and on the right will continue to use the issue of NATO expansion to further their own political causes. They will continue to blame the current problems within Russia on the West and focus their attention on the most visible element of Western power, NATO. These actions will only strengthen the opposition to the expansion of the alliance within society and the political elites.

Virtually all Russians are united in their opposition to NATO expansion. Though the various elements of society and factions of the political elites are motivated by different reasons or combinations of reasons for opposition, they are still against the growth of the Atlantic Alliance. To understand how these motivations and beliefs are translated into

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258 Alex Pravda, "Russia and European Security: The Delicate Balance," NATO Review, May 1995, p. 21.

259 Vyacheslav Nikonov, "Russia and NATO: Cooperation, Neutrality, or Confrontation?" Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 14 September 1994, p. 4, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVI, No. 37, 1994, p. 25.

governmental policies and actions, it is necessary to understand the formal foreign policy decision-making structure and how domestic politics affects actual decision-making.

B. FORMAL STRUCTURE OF FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING

The Russian Federation's foreign policy appears to be ambiguous and unstable, with often times contradictory statements issued by different elements of the government in Moscow. This situation stands in contrast to the USSR's relatively consistent and stable foreign policy, which was acted upon in a disciplined manner by all segments of government. With the end of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia entered a period of internal political disorder that has affected all elements of policy, including foreign policy. Russia's chaotic internal political situation has made it impossible for a consistent foreign policy to be agreed upon and implemented. Instead, different elements of the government have attempted to fashion and re-fashion the state's foreign policy to conform to their own political views. In many cases, foreign policy has fallen victim to domestic political in-fighting. Nowhere is this more evident than in the policy towards NATO expansion. This issue has been repeatedly used as a weapon by different political factions fighting for power in the government. The result is a confused policy that defies precise definition. To understand the Russian policy towards NATO expansion, it is necessary to understand both the formal structure of Russian foreign policy decision-making and the internal political dynamics that allow and motivate political factions to use and misuse that formal structure. This section will explore the evolution of the formal foreign policy decision-making structure from the end of the Soviet Union to the present Russian system.

The Soviet Union and its legacy had a great effect on the current structure of foreign policy decision-making in the Russian Federation. During the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, the locus of power was in the CPSU, and more precisely the Political Bureau, or Politburo, and not in the government ministries. The Politburo, which was led by the General Secretary and consisted of fifteen to twenty of the most senior members of the CPSU, generally made foreign policy decisions by using a rule of internal consensus. These decisions were automatically approved by the Central Committee at bi-annual meetings.[260] Control of the government ministries was maintained through the Central

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Committee's International Department, Party membership of the government bureaucrats, and later, the inclusion of the most important Ministers (Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Chairman of KGB) in the Politburo. Through this system foreign policy decision-making was "highly centralized, controlled, and coordinated by the CPSU Politburo."[261] Despite this rigid centralization, there was a certain element of bureaucratic politics, with constantly shifting levels of influence, amongst the different ministries and institutions represented within the Politburo. On occasion, the General Secretary, "who did not have the advantage of endorsement by popular vote and who was no longer able to use terror against his rivals," was even forced to build and align coalitions of powerful elements within the apparatus or defer to the leaders of the security forces.[262] The centralization of this Soviet system began to break down as a result of Gorbachev's reforms in the late 1980's.

During the first phases of these reforms, Gorbachev increased the limited forum for the discussion of foreign policy issues and reduced the level of specialization of the key foreign policy "institutions." This resulted in a weakening of the CPSU International Department's hold on implementing policy, the end of the security services' monopoly on defense-related policy, and a steady shift of influence to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These actions were taken in part to skirt resistance within the CPSU and the military to Gorbachev's new policies of reduced tensions with the West and serious arms control negotiations. The creation of an executive presidency, with Gorbachev as the President, and the reduced power of the CPSU, specifically the Politburo and International Department, further decentralized control of foreign policy. By 1991, strict central control had been lost and, as there was no underlying national consensus on foreign policy goals, rogue elements of the government, specifically the security services, began to apply their own ideas to foreign policy implementation. These ideas were at odds with the new

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260 Richard Staar, USSR: Foreign Policies After Détente (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1985), pp. 21-25.

261 Peter Shearman, "Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1991," in Peter Shearman, ed., Russian Foreign Policy Since 1990 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), p. 14.

262 Neil Malcolm, "Russian Foreign Policy Decision-making," in Peter Shearman, ed., Russian Foreign Policy Since 1990 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), p. 24.

political thinking of Gorbachev and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[263] With the dissolution of the CPSU after the August 1991 coup attempt, all means of controlling the various elements of the government with foreign policy interests were eliminated, reducing foreign policy decision-making to a situation of institutional anarchy.

The dis-establishment of the Soviet Union left the Russian Federation with a legacy of chaotic internal politics. This was certainly the case with regards to foreign policy decision-making. The old Soviet constitution, which remained in effect until late 1993, gave the Supreme Soviet, "the supreme organ of state power," the authority to create the state's general foreign policy while it required the president and government to implement that policy.[264] Unfortunately, this had never actually occurred, and no element of the government was willing to submit to the will of the Supreme Soviet, creating a situation in which the "established" hierarchy was neither accepted nor obeyed. The virtually overnight loss of the International Department and other elements of the CPSU that coordinated and guided all aspects of foreign policy created a massive overload on the capacities of the president and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This gave other elements of government the opportunity to act in the foreign policy field with little or no real political control.[265] The intense specialization and limited debate during the Soviet period left Russia with few leaders who were able to deal with foreign policy objectively. Bureaucratic perspectives dominated Russian leaders' foreign policy beliefs and goals, making it difficult to build a consensus within the government. Often times, these different beliefs were extremely polarized, as was the government and society in general, and foreign policy issues, such as NATO expansion, quickly became political weapons for the opposition parties.[266]

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263 Ibid., p. 25.

264 Ibid., p. 27.

265 Scott Parrish, "Chaos in Foreign-Policy Decision-Making," Transition, 17 May 1996, p. 30.

266 Malcolm, "Russian Foreign Policy Decision-making," pp. 25-26.

Immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and into 1992, the Russian president was effectively in control of establishing foreign policy. Despite its constitutional authority, the Supreme Soviet openly deferred to the executive branch. Ruslan Khasbulatov, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, stated, "the foreign policy of the country is determined primarily by the president. We support the foreign policy of our president."[267] Within the executive branch, the primary responsibility for coordinating foreign policy fell to the Foreign Ministry, though Yeltsin maintained the final authority to make major decisions. During this period the security services were politically weakened and physically split apart, while a Russian Defense Ministry did not even exist. These circumstances allowed the Foreign Ministry, under Kozyrev, to have complete control over foreign policy decision-making for the first half of 1992.

This situation began to deteriorate for the Foreign Ministry with the creation of the Defense Ministry in March 1992 and the appointment of the first Defense Minister, General Pavel Grachev, in May 1992. From the moment Grachev took office, the Defense Ministry started a campaign for influence over foreign policy decision-making. This organization was determined to achieve the important status its Soviet predecessor had held in the decision-making structure.[268] At the same time, the Supreme Soviet was starting to make its presence felt in the foreign policy arena. The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Supreme Soviet, Yevgeniy Ambartsumov, used his position as "a bully pulpit to attack the Foreign Ministry" in an attempt to alter the current foreign policy and increase his own influence.[269] Throughout 1992 and into 1993, the parliament continued to attack Yeltsin and the Foreign Ministry over foreign policy issues as the polarization of the executive and legislative branches of government increased. The parliament went so far as to pass laws and resolutions that were in direct conflict with the president's announced foreign policies.

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267 Ruslan Khasbulatov, 6 February 1992, cited in Diplomaticheskii Vestnik, No. 6, 1992, p. 32, cited in Malcolm, "Russian Foreign Policy Decision-making," p. 39.

268 Malcolm, "Russian Foreign Policy Decision-making," p. 36.

269 Rumer, Russian National Security and Foreign Policy in Transition, p. 21.

By the end of 1992, the Defense Ministry, the security services, and the Supreme Soviet had created enough doubt in the ability of Kozyrev and the Foreign Ministry, that Yeltsin had to act. His first action was to issue a decree in November 1992 that, in Kozyrev's words, made the Foreign Ministry the "horizontal coordinator" of foreign policy for the president. Through this law, the Foreign Ministry acquired the responsibility to coordinate all actions of the ministries, the military, and other elements of the executive branch concerning foreign policy.[270] Within a month in December 1992, Yeltsin acted again, this time creating an Interdepartmental Foreign Policy Commission under the Security Council. This commission was tasked to "coordinate the drafting of foreign policy decisions,"[271] a function that had just been assigned to the Foreign Ministry. This was a reaction to Kozyrev's lack of internal political authority, which made it impossible for the Foreign Ministry to effectively coordinate foreign policy actions in all the discordant elements of government. This commission soon proved to be a failure, spending most of its time engaged in "turf wars" and internal security matters, and it now plays a minor role in the formulation of foreign policy.[272]

The October 1993 conflict between the Supreme Soviet and the President, and the new Constitution that was adopted in December 1993 as a result, altered the balance of power in foreign policy decision-making between the legislative and executive branches. The new Constitution stated that the President "exercises leadership in Russian Federation foreign policy" and has the authority to conduct negotiations and sign international treaties.[273] More importantly, the President has the authority to appoint any government

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270 Dmitry Kozyrev, "Foreign Ministry Will Now Coordinate Policy," Rossiiskaya Gazeta, 1 December 1992, p. 6, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLIV, No. 48, 1992, p. 17.

271 "President's Decree Establishes Foreign Policy Commission," ITAR-TASS, 17 December 1992, cited in FBIS-SOV-92-244, 18 December 1992, p. 26.

272 Parrish, "Chaos in Foreign-Policy Decision-Making," p. 32.

273 Constitution of the Russian Federation, Article 86, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLV, No. 45, 1993, pp. 4-16.

official, except the Prime Minister, who must have the consent of the Duma, and dismiss any official, including the Prime Minister.[274] This ability to hire and fire at will creates a situation where all government officials, including those elements involved in foreign policy decision-making, are directly accountable to the President. The Duma's only real influence over foreign policy resides in its authority to ratify international treaties.[275] Yeltsin further increased his hold on foreign policy decision-making with a January 1994 decree that re-organized the chain of command for some key ministries. This decree stated that the Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry, the Federal Intelligence Service (FIS), and the Federal Border Service (FBS) would be subordinated directly to the president as opposed to the prime minister, as they had been previously.[276] With these changes, Yeltsin was theoretically in firm control of the entire foreign policy decision-making structure.

In reality, Yeltsin was unable to exercise anything close to firm control during 1994 and early 1995. His Foreign Minister did not have the political clout to effectively impose order on the foreign policy decision-making process. The Defense Minister routinely attempted to pursue an independent foreign policy while his ministry was locked in a struggle for influence with the Foreign Ministry. Even the interdepartmental commission that was created under the Security Council failed to coordinate, or even become involved with, the government's foreign policy actions. In an attempt to rectify this situation, Yeltsin resorted to his earlier ineffective methods of "creating order".

A new decree was issued by the president in March 1995 to consolidate power in the Foreign Ministry. The Statute on the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was promulgated "to ensure the conduct of a uniform Russian policy line."[277] In this decree, the

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274 Ibid., Article 83.

275 Ibid., Article 106.

276 Parrish, "Chaos in Foreign-Policy Decision-Making," p. 31.

277 Statute on the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 15 March 1995, cited in Yekaterina Akopova, "Yeltsin Decrees Enhance Foreign Ministry's Role," Kommersant-Daily, 16 March 1995, p. 1, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 11, 1995, p. 7.

president confirmed that the "Foreign Ministry remains the chief coordinator of the country's foreign policy and that all other departments are required to clear any steps they take in the international arena with the ministry."[278] This decree was virtually identical to the 1992 decree. Like the first decree, this decree failed to solve the problem of a politically weak Foreign Minister who was unable to rein in the other elements of the government.

Yeltsin's reaction to the failure of this new decree to solve the problem was, as in 1992, to create a new organization to coordinate foreign policy. In December 1995, the president issued a decree to form the Council on Foreign Policy. This group was to be headed by the president. It was to produce recommendations that would then be given to the president for approval. This council, which was staffed by members of the relevant ministries and the security services, was planned to coordinate the efforts of the principal departments that worked in the foreign policy arena.[279] Shortly after this council was created, Yeltsin again took action to improve the coordination of foreign policy.

In January 1996, Yevgenii Primakov replaced Kozyrev as Foreign Minister. Primakov, who had been the director of the FIS, was more acceptable to the opposition parties and was much more politically powerful than Kozyrev. Yeltsin expected that Primakov would be able to have greater success at reining in the rogue elements of government, and to an extent this was correct. Despite Primikov's successes at actually coordinating the Russian foreign policy, Yeltsin felt that it was necessary to reiterate that the Foreign Ministry was in charge of foreign policy.[280] In March 1996, Yeltsin issued his third decree stipulating that the Foreign Ministry was tasked to coordinate the activities of all elements of the executive branch as regards foreign policy. The new law stated that the Foreign Ministry "shall be the principal agency in the field of relations with foreign states

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278 Maksim Yusin, "Three Presidential Decrees That Will Transform the Foreign Ministry," Izvestia, 17 March 1995, p. 3, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 11, 1995, p. 8.

279 Yevgeny Bai and Gennady Charodeyev, "President Decides to Strengthen Foreign Policy with Another Council," Izvestia, 28 December 1995, p. 1, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 52, 1995, p. 22.

280 Parrish, "Chaos in Foreign-Policy Decision-Making," p. 33.

and international organizations and shall exercise overall supervision...."[281] Considering the increased political power of the new Foreign Minister, it is very possible that the Foreign Ministry will finally be able to effectively coordinate the activities of the diverse elements of the executive branch as they pertain to foreign policy.

C. INTERNAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND NATO EXPANSION

The constantly changing political situation within Russia has made it difficult to find a consistent official policy on relations with the West and NATO expansion. The demise of the Soviet Union left a nation bereft of sound political institutions or even a unifying political ideology. As Martin Malia wrote, "communism left in its wake, as a poisoned legacy to the democratic August Revolution, nothing but rubble."[282] From under this rubble a system has appeared that is full of institutional emptiness and multiple centers of power, in which the Constitution is neither accepted as legitimate by the people, nor followed by the President. There are few full-fledged political parties, though more than fifty groups are officially registered as such. Instead, "the political configuration in parliament can best be understood in terms of factions" and "frequently shifting, amorphous political blocs."[283] Within this system, the diverse factions maneuver for power and attempt to sway the voters with emotional rhetoric. There is no stable governmental coalition or unified opposition. Instead, the leading personalities of these factions operate in an environment where established institutions and official power structures play a secondary role, and as a result "political positions are easily and speedily changed."[284] One of the most sensitive areas is foreign policy, especially relations with the West.

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281 "Foreign Policy Will Be Handled By Those Who Are Supposed To Do So," Kommersant-Daily, 14 March 1996, p. 3, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVIII, No. 11, 1996, p. 20.

282 Martin Malia, "From Under the Rubble, What?" Problems of Communism, January-April 1992, p. 91.

283 Nations in Transit: Civil Society, Democracy and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States (United States of America: Freedom House, 1995), pp. 114-115.

284 Gerhard Simon, "Political Culture in Russia," Aussenpolitik, Vol. 46, 1995, p. 252.

The foreign policy legacy of the Soviet Union included the "new political thinking" initiated by Gorbachev and his Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, in the mid to late 1980's. This policy entailed cooperation with the West in arms control and a general reduction in the confrontational nature of East-West relations, while maintaining the distinct political and economic differences that separated Western Europe from the "Soviet Empire". Immediately after the break-up of the Soviet Union, an official pro-Western or Atlanticist foreign policy was established by the pro-democracy and reformist factions that held power. These factions can be seen as the heirs of the *zapadniki*, or "Westernisers," who since the nineteenth century have "defined themselves in terms of Western values"[285] and have aspired to bring Russia into the family of Western states. "The *zapadniki* anticipated that the concept of the West, defined in terms of the sanctity of law, political methods of conflict resolution and collective security, could be extended eastwards to embrace the entire Eurasian continent."[286] The reformist and pro-democracy factions hoped that ties to the West would anchor their reform movement and help to marshal the resources needed to overcome the resistance of Russian society to political and economic reforms.

The leading figures behind this new Atlanticist foreign policy were President Boris Yeltsin, State Secretary Gennady Burbulis, and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. Other leading reformers, such as acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar, leader of the Democratic Choice "party", and First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, were proponents of this new policy but were not involved in its development or implementation. Yeltsin was clearly the most important figure behind the Atlanticist foreign policy, which (though Yeltsin would be loath to acknowledge the fact) had its roots in Gorbachev's foreign policy. Some have called Yeltsin's ideas "new political thinking plus" as they go much further than did Gorbachev's policies and approach the ideas of the *zapadniki*. Analyst Jeff Checkel has contrasted the two policies as follows: "whereas the Gorbachev leadership sought

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285 Leszek Buszynski, "Russia and the West: Towards Renewed Geopolitical Rivalry?" Survival, Autumn 1995, p. 104.

286 Ibid., p. 105.

accommodation with the West, Yeltsin wants something more: entry into the 'civilized' (that is, Western) world; 'integration' with its primary institutions; and 'partnership' with the United States."[287] Despite Yeltsin's dominant position in foreign policy decision-making, Kozyrev was the main spokesman for this Atlanticist foreign policy. He articulated a new ideology that would guide Russia's relations with the West in a number of articles in both the Russian and Western press. In an Izvestia article, written just days after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Kozyrev wrote that Russia was "counting on a dependable partnership with foreign states to help us solve many of our problems" and that it must "bring to a logical conclusion the not always consistent steps toward rapprochement that began with perestroika." He went on to say that the "the developed countries of the West are Russia's natural allies."[288] Writing to a Western audience in the journal Foreign Affairs, Kozyrev declared that Russia will remain a great, though "normal", power that defends its national interests through "interaction with partners, not through confrontation."[289]

The pro-Western foreign policy based relations with the West on international institutions that would serve in a collective security role. For Kozyrev, this approach was not surprising, considering that he served in the Directorate of International Organizations of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1974 to 1990.[290] The most important institutions for the application of his policy were to be the CSCE and the UN. Russia and the rest of the CIS joined the CSCE in January 1992, and Kozyrev hoped that the experiences of this organization would lead to the "civilized development of the Commonwealth [of Independent States]." The Foreign Minister also believed that "the United Nations has a special role to play. Russia intends to promote in every possible way

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287 Jeff Checkel, "Russian Foreign Policy: Back to the Future?" RFE/RL Research Report, 16 October 1992, p. 19.

288 Andrei Kozyrev, "A Transformed Russia in a New World," Izvestia, 2 January 1992, p. 3, cited in Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLIV, No. 1, 1992, p. 22.

289 Andrei Kozyrev, "Russia: A Chance for Survival," Foreign Affairs, Spring 1992, p.10.

290 Checkel, "Russian Foreign Policy: Back to the Future?" p. 21.

the strengthening of the United Nations as an instrument to harmonize national, regional and global interests."[291] Kozyrev thought that the end of the Cold War and the changes taking place in Central Europe and Russia would lead to radical changes in the mission and structure of NATO. He saw the formation of the NACC as the first step towards NATO's development into a more pan-European collective security organization instead of a defensive alliance.[292]

The pro-Western foreign policy, as described by Kozyrev's statements, reflected a general consensus of the reformist political factions that dominated the government in early 1992, but these priorities "were not fully shared" by all elements of the political elite or society.[293] The Foreign Minister understood this fact, writing in January 1992 that his policy "is the firm position of those who make up the government of Russia today, but not yet the mentality of the entire society, particularly in its managerial apparatus and in the corridors of the military-industrial complex."[294] He hoped that economic prosperity resulting from the various reforms would solidify support for the pro-Western foreign policy.

The Atlanticist foreign policy soon came under fire from more centrist and nationalist factions and was used by these groups, for internal political reasons, to discredit those in power. Leszek Buszynski accurately describes the situation as follows:

> For domestic audiences, the pro-Western policy was fundamentally flawed. Resorting to broad visions of shared democratic values and collective security was irrelevant to those whose concerns related to specific security and political issues in the 'near abroad' or former Soviet Union. The pro-Western policy was criticized by a wide spectrum of opinion groups - moderate and hard-line nationalists, communists, 'neo- Bolsheviks' and so-called Eurasianists - for failing to reflect Russia's real interests.[295]

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291 Kozyrev, "Russia: A Chance for Survival," p. 11.

292 Ibid. p. 13.

293 Richard Kugler, Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor (Santa Monica: RAND, 1996), p. 29.

294 Kozyrev, "Russia: A Chance for Survival," p. 15.

Kozyrev, the most vocal proponent of the Atlanticist foreign policy, quickly became a lightning rod for the fury of these more conservative factions. By mid-1992, the policy was starting to be criticized by various opposition groups for allegedly failing to safeguard Russia's vital national interests and as being humiliating to the greatness of the Russian people. This criticism coincided with the attempts by the newly formed Defense Ministry and the Supreme Soviet to increase their influence over foreign policy decision-making.

In May 1992, at a conference on military doctrine, Colonel-General Igor Rodionov, then Chief of the General Staff Academy, listed a number of goals that he believed should be Russia's national interests. The goals included "maintaining the CIS states under Russia's exclusive influence," the "neutrality of East European countries or their friendly relations with Russia," "free Russian access to seaports in the Baltics," and "the exclusion of 'third country' military forces from the Baltics and non-membership of the Baltic states in military blocs directed at Russia."[296] These goals were generally adopted by the centrist factions and groups that criticized Yeltsin's government and its foreign policy. One of the more prominent groups, the Civic Union, created in the summer of 1992, was formed by a number of influential factions that inhabited the center of the Russian political spectrum. This group, which advocated the defense of Russians in the near-abroad, as well as Rodionov's goals, "gave form to a so-called centrist opposition."[297] Another centrist group, the Foreign and Defense Policy Council, which formed in early 1993, claimed that Russia must maintain a pragmatic engagement with the far-abroad and ensure that the nations of Central Europe did not join any security systems in which Russia was not also a member.[298] These ideas found increasing support in the Defense Ministry and with the military. The Russian vote in the UN Security Council to apply sanctions against Serbia, a

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295 Buszynski, "Russia and the West: Towards Renewed Geopolitical Rivalry?" p. 105-6.

296 Igor Rodionov, "Approaches to Russian Military Doctrine" Speech, given at the General Staff Academy's conference on military-science, 27-30 May 1992, cited in James Brusstar, "Russian Vital Interests and Western Security," Orbis, Fall 1994, p. 609.

297 William Jackson, "Imperial Temptations: Ethnics Abroad," Orbis, Winter 1994, p. 14.

298 Kugler, Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor, pp. 30-31.

suspicion that the Yeltsin government intended to return the disputed Northern Territories to Japan, and, most critically, the Foreign Ministry's dispute with the Supreme Soviet over the protection of Russians living in the "near abroad" continued to reduce support for the government's pro-Western foreign policy.

By mid-1993, three major schools of thought on foreign policy had emerged. The first school consisted of the Atlanticists, who still controlled the government and the "official" foreign policy, though they were in serious competition with the Supreme Soviet and the security services. The second school was composed of statists or *derzhavniki*. These centrists were "advocates of a strong and powerful state which can maintain order, a rather traditional Russian view of the state's role."[299] Richard Kugler, an analyst with the RAND National Defense Research Institute, described the statist foreign policy as one that "seeks a secure environment that will allow the state to live safely and prosper. Accordingly, it often aspires to dominate the areas near its borders and to exert influence farther out."[300] The third and final school consisted of the "Neo-Imperialists." These extreme nationalists called for the "reabsorption of the CIS and a rearmed Russian empire that would act as a global power, in opposition to the West, if necessary."[301]

Until as late as 1993, the supporters of the Atlanticist foreign policy still felt that the CSCE would become the main European security institution and that NATO would be radically altered or even go the way of the Warsaw Pact. As the idea of NATO expansion was discussed in the West and became a more realistic option, the key foreign policy makers began to doubt their basic strategy of relations with the West. For a short period of time in the summer of 1993, no consistent policy towards NATO expansion was held by the Russian government. In August 1993, Yeltsin, with Polish President Lech Walesa, issued a declaration concerning Poland's intention to join NATO, stating that "In the long term, such a decision taken by a sovereign Poland in the interest of overall European integration does

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299 Buszynski, "Russia and the West: Towards Renewed Geopolitical Rivalry?" p. 108.

300 Kugler, Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor, p. 25.

301 Ibid., p. 32.

not go against the interests of other states, including the interests of Russia."[302] Yeltsin also "stated publicly that Russia 'has no right' to hinder the Czech Republic's joining of any organization."[303] These improvisational comments were characteristic of Yeltsin's "off-the-cuff remarks" made during other foreign visits.[304] The statements were soon "reinterpreted" and, a month later, Yeltsin sent a letter to the leaders of the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France in which "he warns against expanding NATO by admitting former socialist countries of Eastern Europe."[305] In his letter, Yeltsin explained that his earlier statements were merely an "opportunity to confirm the sovereign right of each state to choose its own method for guaranteeing its security," and expressed alarm over the discussion of NATO expansion. He wrote that "not only the opposition, but also moderate circles will--undoubtedly--view this [NATO expansion] as a new kind of isolation for our country, something that diametrically contradicts our logical involvement in the Euro-Atlantic region."[306]

The conflict between the President and the Supreme Soviet on October 1993 radically altered the power structure that ruled Russia. After the fighting ended, Yeltsin found himself much more dependent on the military and the centrist political factions. The newly empowered Russian security agencies began forming a united policy against NATO expansion. In November 1993, the chief of the FIS, Yevgeny Primakov, with the concurrence of the Defense Ministry and General Staff, issued a report implying that the

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302 "Joint Russian-Polish Declaration," ITAR-TASS World Service, 25 August 1993, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-164, 26 August 1993, p. 13.

303 James Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, McNair Paper No. 40 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1995), p. 96-97.

304 Crow, "Russian Views on an Eastward Expansion of NATO," p. 21.

305 Vladimir Lapsky, "President Urges West Not to Expand NATO," Izvestia, 2 October 1993, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLV, No. 40, 1993, p. 33.

306 Boris Yeltsin, cited in "Yeltsin's Secret Letter on NATO Expansion," Prague Mlada Fronta Dnes, 2 December 1993, p. 6, cited in FBIS-SOV-93-231, 3 December 1993, p. 6.

defense establishment opposed NATO expansion because it would create a siege mentality in Russia.[307] The report stated that NATO's move to the east would affect Russia's security interests and create a barrier between Russia and the rest of the continent. Specifically, the report said that Baltic membership in NATO would be a "challenge to Russia, whose geopolitical interests are at variance with the military presence of third states in the Baltic region."[308] While announcing the issuance of this report, Primakov emphasized to reporters that "our renewed Russia has a right to count on having its opinion taken into consideration."[309] The security services, with their new position of influence, and specifically Primakov, continued to extol the statist view of safeguarding Russia's national interests regardless of how it affects relations with the West.

The rise of imperial revisionism was reinforced by the success of the communist and nationalist factions, especially Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party, in the December 1993 parliamentary elections. Zhirinovsky, a rabid nationalist and neo-imperialist, had promised to restore the greatness of the Russian empire, even including the return of Alaska to Russian control. The Duma elections saw the reformist and liberal factions lose seats while the centrist and far-right factions gained significantly. This victory, combined with NATO's January 1994 decision to remain open for expansion and the increased importance of the Russian security services, sealed the fate of the government's Atlanticist foreign policy.

A new statist policy, one of opposition to NATO expansion and support for Russians abroad, was soon expounded by Kozyrev and supported by Yeltsin. In a January

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307 Buszynski, "Russia and the West: Towards Renewed Geopolitical Rivalry?" p. 110.

308 "Prospects for the Expansion of NATO and Russia's Interests," a Russian FIS report issued 25 November 1993, cited in Andrei Poleshchuk, "The Special Opinion of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service," Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 26 November 1993, p. 1, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLV, No. 47, 1994, p. 13.

309 Yevgeny Primakov, press conference, 25 November 1993, cited in Andrei Poleshchuk, "The Special Opinion of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service," Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 26 November 1993, p. 1, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLV, No. 47, 1994, p. 13.

1994 speech, Kozyrev "signaled his acceptance of the prevailing trend," and declared that the main issue for Russian diplomacy was to secure the rights of the Russian minorities in the near-abroad, including support for a military presence in that area.[310] Yeltsin, in his February 1994 "State of the Federation" address, reiterated that the "consistent promotion of Russia's national interests is the main task of our [Russian] foreign policy," and that "if required to protect the state's legitimate interests, Russia has a right to act firmly and tough...." He further expressed his opposition to NATO expansion, calling it "a path toward new threats to Europe and the world."[311] This new statist foreign policy was primarily aimed at halting NATO expansion, which the centrists saw as the greatest threat to Russian security interests.

The Russians had a special concern about the Baltic states being included in NATO. "The admission of the East European countries to NATO would inevitably cause tension.... Not to mention the pernicious consequences that the Baltic countries' participation in this alliance could have."[312] These comments written by Doctor of History Boris Pokland in a Pravda editorial shortly after the parliamentary elections were representative of the opinions of many leaders, from the moderate liberals to the nationalists. The Baltic states were considered to be in a different category from the rest of Eastern Europe. It was claimed that this was due to the large number of ethnic-Russians in the region, especially in Estonia and Latvia, where they made up about a third of the population and questions about their civil rights and eligibility for citizenship existed. The Russian military was also concerned about the use of strategic bases, such as the Hen House ballistic missile early warning radar site at Skrunda, Latvia, a secure transit route to Kaliningrad, and the proximity of the Baltics to critical military facilities around St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad and in the Russian "heartland." The Russian troop withdrawals from Estonia and Latvia were slowed down

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310 Buszynski, "Russia and the West: Towards Renewed Geopolitical Rivalry?" p. 109.

311 Boris Yeltsin, speech to Federation Council and Duma in Moscow, 24 February 1994, cited in FBIS-SOV-94-037, 24 February 1994, p. 20.

312 Boris Poklad, "Postelection Russia and the West," Pravda, 29 December 1993, p. 5, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLV, No. 52, 1994, p. 1.

and tied to the satisfactory conclusion of agreements on these issues. This action was, of course, denounced by Western leaders and gave the Baltic states a greater desire to join NATO.

After the December 1993 parliamentary elections and throughout 1994, the Russian government's position towards NATO hardened as mainstream Russian politics shifted towards the center and the right.. The worsening of the economic situation did nothing to help pro-Western attitudes, and the nostalgia for Soviet greatness continued to grow. "If there is a foreign policy issue on which there is national consensus in Russia, it is the issue of NATO expansion," stated Vyacheslav Nikonov.[313] In an attempt to take the offensive against expansion, Kozyrev outlined a plan that would separate the NACC from NATO and link it to the CSCE.[314] Writing in the journal Foreign Affairs in May 1994, Kozyrev asserted that,

> The creation of a unified, non-bloc Europe can best be pursued by upgrading the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe into broader and more universal organization. After all, it was the democratic principles of the 56-member CSCE that won the Cold War--not the NATO military machine. The CSCE should have the central role in transforming the post-confrontational system of Euro-Atlantic cooperation into a truly stable, democratic regime.[315]

Kozyrev's ideas were in line with Yeltsin's earlier proposal to make the CSCE essentially an umbrella organization supported by equally important NATO and CIS pillars.[316] By the summer of 1995, Kozyrev had abandoned the idea of using the CSCE as an alternative to NATO and promoted the idea of turning NATO into a CSCE, but without the Central Asian or Trans-Caucasian states. Referring to NATO's policy towards expansion as a

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313 Vyacheslav Nikonov, "Russia and NATO," Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 14 September 1994, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVI, No. 37, 1994, p. 25.

314 Gerhard Wettig, "Post-Soviet Central Europe in International Security," European Security, Autumn 1994, p. 469.

315 Andrei Kozyrev, "The Lagging Partnership," Foreign Affairs, May/June 1994, p. 65.

316 Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, p. 122.

continuation of "a policy aimed at containment of Russia," he wrote that Russia would only accept the "gradual entry" of the Central European states into NATO after Russia's entry into the alliance and the "transformation of NATO into a pan-European security organization and a joint instrument for the efficient response to the new common challenges."[317] These alternatives to NATO expansion were an attempt to ensure that the Eastern European states would remain in a collective security system with no ability to provide protection against coercion by a great power, such as Russia, and one in which the Russians would be able to maintain a degree of influence.

After the war in Chechnya commenced, the Russian government began to make threats to forestall any expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe. The CFE Treaty soon became a target for nationalists in and out of government. Objections were raised that the treaty had been signed before the demise of the Warsaw Pact and was now unfair towards Russia, especially on the issue of forces in the northern and southern flank regions. In April 1995, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev bluntly told Secretary of Defense William Perry that "if NATO's zone of responsibility is extended eastward, Russia will take 'appropriate measures' and will be forced to reconsider its obligation under the CFE Treaty."[318] Meanwhile, Yeltsin, in a news conference in September 1995, again called for NATO to be transformed from a military organization to a political one and commented that expansion "will mean a conflagration of war throughout Europe."[319]

The threats of action have been even more severe against the Baltic states and their possible admission into the alliance. Pavel Felgengauer wrote that "while Polish membership in NATO would pose a dangerous military threat, the integration of the Baltics into NATO is utterly unacceptable in any form. Moscow will never allow Poland, and especially the Baltics, to become a potential military toehold for exerting pressure on

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317 Andrei Kozyrev, "Partnership of Cold Peace?" Foreign Policy, Summer 1995, p. 13.

318 Boris Vinogradov, Izvestia, 3 April 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No 14, 1995, p. 7.

319 Steven Erlanger, "New Attack Against NATO," New York Times, 9 September 1995, p. 5.

Russia."[320] A similar idea was stated by Grachev at a press conference in September 1995: "we continue to take a negative view of the entry of East European countries into NATO, and we remain opponents of NATO's expansion.... But if the Baltic countries become members of NATO, Russia will no longer be able to make compromises."[321] The Russian government, the military, and most of the opposition parties see the Baltic states as an area of great concern and would feel exceptionally threatened if they were to join NATO.

As a result of the war in Chechnya, the military lost confidence in Russia's democrats and reformers. Russian society has also become increasingly divided between those who support the use of the armed forces and those who do not, with the former gaining the upper hand.[322] This willingness to use force does not bode well for the future and lends credibility to September 1995 reports of a draft version of a new Russian defense doctrine. This doctrine dictates the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Kaliningrad and Belarus in response to an expansion of NATO. More ominously, if the Baltic states were to join NATO, the doctrine would call for the occupation of the Baltic states by Russian troops, and any NATO response would be considered cause for a nuclear war. According to "a high-ranking General Staff officer," the plan was "cautiously approved" by Grachev, and it was created by the military in "response to the absence of any consistent policy line," or more likely, an acceptable foreign policy line, from the Foreign Ministry or the President's office on military security. Of special concern is the fact that this policy would not lack supporters "in the Duma and inside the Kremlin."[323] Kozyrev quickly

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320 Pavel Felgengauer, "Russian Generals Aren't Interested in NATO Countries Good Intentions," Sevodnya, 23 June 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 25, 1995, p. 31.

321 Pyotr Karapetyan, "Would Expanded NATO Push Russia Out of Europe," Krasnaya Zvezda, 27 September 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 39, 1995, p. 10.

322 Pavel Felgenhauer, "Russia, the Use of Force, and Security of the Near Abroad," (Paper presented at the IISS Annual Conference, Vienna, Austria, 6-9 September 1995), p.24.

denied that this doctrine existed but went on to say that "opinions calling for the taking of counter-measures are being expressed. This could create quite a stir in the Baltics."[324] A few days later, another "high-ranking" officer stated that the General Staff was studying proposals that would be submitted to the President. These proposals would call for targeting Poland and the Czech Republic with nuclear weapons if they joined NATO and the creation of new armor and infantry divisions to be stationed in Belarus and Russia for use in the Baltic states.[325] On a related note, in January 1996 the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, a political ally of the anti-Western hard-line factions, warned that he would ask Russia to redeploy nuclear weapons in Belarus if NATO extended membership to the Central European states.[326] All of these implicit threats seem to fit a pattern of gradual increases to what the Russians claim their response will be to NATO expansion. The Russians appear to be taking special precautions to ensure that the Baltic states do not join the alliance.

This point is taken to the extreme by the ultra-nationalist and neo-imperialist factions. An example of their thinking is the October 1995 report issued by the Defense Research Institute in Moscow. This private group, which may have some ties to the Defense Ministry and the military, stated that NATO expansion is a Western attempt to isolate Russia and drive it out of Europe. The authors claimed that it is a "resumption of German expansion to the east and southeast, which was twice interrupted in this century" and is being accomplished "under the American 'nuclear umbrella'."[327] Concerning the

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323 Aleksandr Lyasko, "Military Threatens to Counter NATO Expansion," Komsomolskaya Pravda, 29 September 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 40, 1995, p. 9.

324 Nikolai Vladimirov, "Kozyrev Denies and Confirms," Nevavisimaya Gazeta, 5 October 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 40, 1995, p. 9.

325 Igor Korotchenko and Mikhail Karpov, "Russian Nuclear Missiles Will Be Retargeted," Nevavisimaya Gazeta, 7 October 1995, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 40, 1995, p. 10.

326 Chrystia Freeland, "Belarus Warns Over Weapons," Financial Times, 19 January 1996.

Baltic states, the report suggested that a "neutral status," like that of "Finland during the Cold War," would be acceptable and that a Russian invasion would be necessary if they joined NATO. The authors believed that Russia would have "every legal and moral reason" for these actions.[328] They compared Estonia and Latvia to the former states of the South African Republic and Southern Rhodesia, proclaiming that the Baltic Russians have a right to form "parallel governmental and power-wielding structures" and a right to turn to Russia for military assistance if threatened by the Baltic governments.[329] These radical statements may not be generally accepted by the majority of Russian leaders, but there is a substantial and growing minority that believes and promotes these views.

Despite all the nationalist rhetoric, there are still a few Russian leaders who do not see a threat from the expansion of NATO and still support an Atlanticist foreign policy. Yegor Gaydar, leader of the Russia's Choice faction, while visiting Estonia in July 1995, stated that he did not think the Baltic states joining NATO would be a threat to Russia. "We think that the expansion of NATO is not a threat to Russia's interests. NATO is an organization incapable of aggressive actions because of its decision making mechanism. It takes a sick imagination to conceive of the Danish, Norwegian, and Luxembourg government[s] agreeing to attack Russia."[330] In a later interview in Bonn, he said that his party never opposed NATO expansion and did not think that NATO posed a military threat to Russia.[331] Unfortunately, those of this view are part of a small minority in Russia, and it

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327 Defense Research Institute, "Conceptual Premises of a Strategy for Counteracting the Principal External Threats to the National Security of the Russian Federation," cited in "Special Institute Staff Suggests Russia Oppose NATO and the USA" Sevodnya, 20 October 1995, p. 3, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVII, No. 44, 1995, p. 10.

328 Ibid., p. 11.

329 Ibid., p. 12.

330 Yegor Gaydar, reported on Tallinn Estonian Television Network, 8 July 1995, cited in FBIS-SOV-95-132, 8 July 1995.

331 Yegor Gaydar, reported on ITAR-TASS, 21 September 1995, cited in "Russian Views on NATO Expansion," FBIS Analysis, 29 September 1995.

is more likely that Russian foreign policy will continue moving towards the right and will involve greater opposition to NATO expansion.

Russia's statist foreign policy was cemented into position by the results of the December 1995 parliamentary elections. The Communist party, the only "viable national party,"[332] and allied factions, such as the Agrarian party, were victorious. This victory ensured that the Duma, dominated by the Communists and nationalists, would continue to demand a statist foreign policy that focused on securing Russia's national interests, especially opposing NATO expansion. The Communists, led by Gennady Zyuganov, have renounced a foreign policy based on ideology and support a pragmatic approach to international relations that promotes Russia's vital national interests.[333] They have also threatened to break the START II and CFE Treaties if NATO expands into Central Europe. The statist foreign policy was further solidified in early 1996 by Yeltsin's removal of his remaining reformers in government, First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, Chief of Staff Sergei Filatov, and most importantly, Foreign Minister Kozyrev, ensuring that the previously Atlanticist ideals of Russian foreign policy would have no supporters in the Yeltsin administration.[334]

Kozyrev's replacement by Yevgenii Primakov, the head of the FIS, in January 1996, was seen as "a symbol of the foreign-policy shift away from the heady idealism of the early 1990s toward a stance rooted in the Russian great-power tradition."[335] This "sign of the new Russian foreign policy consensus" was seen in the comments that greeted Yeltsin's decision to make Primakov the Foreign Minister. Yeltsin's supporters and opponents alike commended Primakov's abilities and his political beliefs, while Zyuganov "described

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332 Angela Stent and Lilia Shevtsova, "Russia's Election: No Turning Back," Foreign Policy, Summer 1996, p. 93.

333 Gennady Zyuganov, "'Junior Partner'? No Way" New York Times, 1 February 1996, p. A15.

334 Stent and Shevtsova, "Russia's Election: No Turning Back," p. 93.

335 Victor Gomez, "Out With the New, In With the Old," Transition, 9 February 1996, p. 2.

Primakov as 'an experienced and skilled statesman,' and Zhirinovsky called his appointment 'the best option possible'."[336] By making Primakov the Foreign Minister, Yeltsin made it possible for the Foreign Ministry to finally take control of coordinating foreign policy for the government. Primakov's political clout within the security services was expected to give him advantages when dealing with the Defense Ministry and the military. He should also be less of a target for the Duma's rage. As one Russian reporter wrote, "he will not draw an allergic reaction from the Communist majority in the Duma, and the Deputies may leave the foreign-policy department in peace, at least at first."[337]

Despite expectations that Primakov would have a greater hold on Russian foreign policy, he did not appear to have control over all elements of the government by February 1996. In that month, the Russian Atomic Energy Minister Viktor Mikhailov, a member of the Security Council, claimed that he would take extreme actions if new states joined NATO and accepted nuclear weapons on their soil. In what was probably a threat motivated by an excessive indulgence in alcohol, he said, "...I am responsible for Russia's nuclear security, I have to take adequate measures. Very simple measures to make it so these sites don't exist. They will simply be destroyed."[338] Mikhailov's threats were quickly "reinterpreted" by his administration to mean Russia would merely "be compelled to take appropriate measures. This does not mean that we would strike NATO military bases in those countries in order to destroy nuclear weapons."[339] This incident, while it does not prove that Russian foreign policy is still disseminated from multiple sources, does show the

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336 Stent and Shevtsova, "Russia's Election: No Turning Back," pp. 101-102.

337 Konstantin Eggert and Maksim Yusin, "About Yevgeny Primakov," Izvestia, 11 January 1996, p. 1, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVIII, No. 2, 1996, p. 10.

338 Lee Hockstader, "Russian Warns of Attack If NATO Expands East," Washington Post, 16 February 1996, p. 29.

339 George Kaurov, Director if Information Administration, Russian Atomic Energy Ministry, cited in Yury Golotyuk, "Ministry Attempts to Explain Its Chief's Statements," Sevodnya, 20 February 1996, p. 2, cited in The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press, Vol. XLVIII, No. 7, 1996, p. 21.

cavalier attitude that some senior Russian leaders have towards accepted international norms of behavior and internal protocol within the Yeltsin administration.

The presidential election held in June 1996 stirred up the Yeltsin government and forced some changes, but generally failed to alter the new foreign policy consensus under Primakov's Foreign Ministry. In the first election, no candidate received over half the vote, as was required to win. Yeltsin gained 35% of the vote, with Zyuganov trailing at 32%, and Aleksandr Lebed at 14%.[340] Yeltsin soon convinced Lebed, a retired Lieutenant-General, to join his campaign, which resulted in Yeltsin's victory in the July 1996 run-off election. Lebed's price for support was his appointment as the head of the Security Council and the dismissal of Lebed's rival, Defense Minister Grachev.[341] Lebed, a nationalist who first gained fame by supporting ethnic Russians in the breakaway Transdnister region as the commander of the Russian 14th Army in Moldova, has long supported a statist foreign policy. The political faction he is associated with, the Congress of Russian Communities, is one of the most outspoken supporters of protecting the ethnic Russians in the near-abroad, claiming that Russia should take "appropriate counter-measures" if ethnic Russians living outside Russia are mistreated, including the use of military force.[342] In his autobiography, Lebed wrote that "we [Russia] should create a successor to czarist Russia as it existed in February 1917."[343] All the information about Lebed's past, from his time in Afghanistan and Moldova, to his campaign rhetoric, suggests that he is sincerely concerned about safeguarding his nation. As a *derzhavnik* and a proponent of the current statist foreign policy, he is unlikely to alter the current policy towards NATO enlargement.

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340 Scott Parrish, "Russia: What Lebed's Policies Could Mean For the Outside World," OMRI Analytical Brief, Vol. 1, No. 176, 17 June 1996, p. 2.

341 Laura Belin, "Yeltsin Picks Lebed's Choice to Lead Defense Ministry," OMRI Analytical Brief, Vol. 1, No. 231, 18 July 1996, p. 1.

342 Parrish, "Russia: What Lebed's Policies Could Mean For the Outside World," p. 2.

343 Alexander Lebed, in his auto-biography I Grieve For My Country, published in October 1995, cited in Alan Koman, "Prince of Darkness" Armed Forces Journal International, January 1996, p. 11.

Lebed's influence in the Yeltsin government was highlighted by the selection of Lebed's choice to fill the vacant Defense Ministry post. Colonel General Igor Rodionov, called the "Butcher of Tbilisi" by some for his involvement in the death of some 20 demonstrators in Georgia in 1989, was selected to be the new Defense Minister in July 1996. Rodionov backed Lebed's political faction, the Congress of Russian Communities, and took part in the founding of the Honor and Motherland movement, which organized Lebed's presidential campaign. Rodionov's selection as the Defense Minister is "expected to strengthen...Lebed's influence over military policy."[344] Rodionov, a confirmed supporter of statist foreign policy since the end of the Soviet Union, will probably act to support Primakov and reduce the rivalry between their two ministries.

Recently, in a possible attempt to prepare for an expected NATO expansion, Lebed told reporter Chrystia Freeland of the Financial Times that he saw no threat in NATO expansion. Lebed said that "he had no objections to NATO's planned eastward expansion." He added that "NATO enlargement would be expensive and unnecessary but that it did not pose a security threat to Russia."[345] His comments may be a sign that the Kremlin's hostility towards NATO enlargement may be easing. In the interview, Lebed said nothing about which countries he might be willing to see in NATO, discussing the whole issue in a very general sense. It would be difficult to imagine Lebed or other Russian leaders accepting NATO membership for the Baltic states, though they might be willing to see the "Visegrad Four" join with relatively little reaction, except for rhetorical opposition.

The recent power struggles within the Yeltsin government, which culminated in the ouster of Lebed as the leader of the Security Council, have seen Lebed's influence on foreign policy wane, but not completely disappear. He is still the most popular politician in Russia and will be able to continue to pressure the government in many ways. These changes within the government have had no effect on the statist foreign policy that has been

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344 Belin, "Yeltsin Picks Lebed's Choice to Lead Defense Ministry," p. 1.

345 Alexander Lebed, cited in Chrystia Freeland, "NATO Growth No Threat," Financial Times, 25 July 1996, p. 1.

followed by the Yeltsin government or on the universally accepted policy of opposition to NATO expansion.

The Yeltsin government, despite its strong flirtation with an Atlanticist foreign policy during its first two years, is solidly supportive of a statist foreign policy. The appointment of Primakov as Foreign Minister, both as a sign of political consensus and as a powerful political player, has finally made it possible for the President, through the Foreign Ministry, to control foreign policy decision-making. The statist foreign policy is by its nature against the expansion of the Atlantic Alliance, which it considers intrinsically hostile towards Russia. Despite this fact, it is very possible that the Yeltsin government, now that it has recently been elected for another four years, would be willing to accept the accession of a limited number of states to NATO membership. Just as the Soviet Union finally accepted the inclusion of the former GDR into NATO, Russia may find itself unable and unwilling to stop the Czech Republic or Poland from joining. This should not be taken as a sign that Russia would be unwilling to act to stop any state from joining NATO. Russia would almost certainly not be willing to accept Baltic membership. To allow this would be political suicide for the Yeltsin government, and it would probably destroy the already fragile unity of the government. It is possible that Russia might attempt to use force to stop the Baltic states from joining the Atlantic Alliance and, at the very least, Russia might attempt to foment civil unrest in these states. As a result of the Russian consensus on a statist foreign policy, NATO expansion that came too close to Russia could eventually cause a conflict between Russia and the West.

V. FUTURE OF NATO EXPANSION

As soon as questions of will or decision or reason or choice of action arise, human science is at a loss.

Professor Noam Chomsky, 30 March 1978[346]

A. ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL FACTORS CONCERNING NATO EXPANSION

In the debate over NATO expansion since the end of the Cold War, many different ideas, opinions, and policies have been forwarded by the individuals, organizations, and states involved. Of the hundreds of factors that affect NATO expansion, only a few stand out as decisive for the future Euro-Atlantic security structure. These factors primarily involve only two states, the United States of America and the Russian Federation. These states, both existing on the periphery of Europe and having developed under circumstances distinctly different from those of the states of Europe, have strong European cultural, economic, and political ties, but could be legitimately classified as non-European. The governments of these two states, through their actions and policies, will be the decisive actors that influence the future European security architecture. The Russian policy of opposition to NATO expansion has created doubts among the leadership of NATO and has reduced actual expansion efforts to rhetoric and dialogue, except for the more practical activities under the aegis of Partnership for Peace. This Russian policy of opposition will continue in the foreseeable future. The only way that NATO can overcome its internal dissension and doubt is through strong and resolute American leadership. The return of this leadership, intermittent at best since the unification of Germany, will depend on the actions of the president and the consent of the "notoriously independent Senate."[347] Even with a return of vibrant American leadership, there would still be the question, what should NATO do about the Baltic states?

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346 Noam Chomsky, comment during a television interview, 30 March 1978, cited in Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 148.

347 Jeremy Rosner, "NATO Enlargement's American Hurdle," Foreign Affairs, July/August 1996, p. 9.

1. The Effects of Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion

The primary factor concerning the Russian Federation is the official policy of opposition to NATO expansion and its effects on the West. The Russians understand that their forceful opposition, replete with veiled threats of a renewed East-West confrontation and military responses, has effectively delayed any serious decisions about inviting new members to join the alliance. As Anatol Lieven wrote, "Russian observers are also fairly optimistic that divisions within NATO itself will stop NATO expansion."[348] The Russian government is attempting to exploit those divisions by emphasizing the negative effects that NATO expansion will have on relations with Russia. This policy is directed towards the "Russia First" elements in Western leadership circles that fear the onset of a Cold Peace with Russia. These "Russia Firsters" continue to believe, as analyst James Brusstar argued:

> ...that the West should not only refrain from immediately granting NATO membership to Central Europe, but should place its highest priority on security cooperation with Russia.
>
> Moreover, incorporation of the countries of Central Europe into the Western defense alliances would not significantly enhance Western security. In fact, an attempt to incorporate them into the West would decrease Western security because Russia would then adopt a much more confrontational stance.[349]

The Western leaders that support these ideas understand that Russia probably would not attempt to stop NATO expansion by the use of military force, partly due to the current inability of its armed forces to project much conventional power beyond Russia's borders, but they fear that Russia would act to damage other strategic Western interests. The following comprehensive list of important Western interests that could be imperiled by the Russian reaction to NATO expansion was compiled by senior analysts at RAND:

> ...accelerating the reintegration of the CIS and turning it into a counter-bloc to NATO; increasing pressure on Ukraine and the Baltic states; building up Russia's military presence in forward areas (Belarus, Kaliningrad, or Moldova); abrogating arms-control agreements, such as the

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348 Anatol Lieven, "Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion," World Today, October 1995, p. 199.

349 James Brusstar, "Russian Vital Interests and Western Security," Orbis, Fall 1994, p. 617.

> CFE Treaty or START II Treaty; opting out of the PFP; curtailing bilateral defence cooperation with Western countries; and reducing cooperation in the UN on an array of issues, ranging from Iraq to Bosnia.[350]

The fear of a Cold Peace that would wreck the recent advances made in East-West relations exists within elements of NATO's leadership, including the United States. The Russians, through their policy of forceful opposition, have played on this fear and have successfully created serious doubts within the leadership of the Atlantic Alliance and delayed its actual expansion.

The current Russian statist foreign policy, which evolved from the Atlanticist foreign policy in effect immediately after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, is supported by a consensus among the majority of political factions in Russia, and it will in all probability continue for the foreseeable future. This statist foreign policy, of which opposition to NATO expansion is an integral part, supports the protection of a certain definition of Russian national interests, even at the expense of worsening relations with the West. "In the view of the Russian establishment, NATO expansion is directed against Russia, and Russia's permanent national interests dictate opposition to this process."[351] Opposition to NATO expansion has become much more than a policy issue for high-level decision-makers. The internal political dynamics of the Russian state have placed the issue in the arena of domestic politics. In the past few years, the centrist and far-right factions have used the issue to discredit the Yeltsin administration and to gain influence over the government. As a result, this emotional issue has been in the public eye and cannot be overlooked by the constantly maneuvering political factions. Journalist Anatol Lieven, describing the Russian domestic political scene in late 1995, explained that,

> ...in opposing this [NATO] expansion, Russian politicians can only gain domestic support. All significant Russian political parties and blocs are now opposed to expansion, including the only remaining powerful liberal grouping, Grigory Yavlinsky's 'Yabloko' bloc. The handful of radical

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350 Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler, and Stephen Larrabee, "NATO Expansion: The Next Steps," Survival, Spring 1995, p. 21.

351 Lieven, "Russian Opposition to NATO Expansion," p. 196.

> 'Atlanticists' who view NATO expansion neutrally or favourably are by now politically insignificant....[352]

This situation was solidified by the results of the December 1995 parliamentary elections and the June/July 1996 Presidential election. NATO expansion will remain a highly sensitive issue in Russian domestic politics, necessitating a policy of forceful opposition by any political faction that hopes to maintain the support of the voters and ensure itself a role in government.

President Yeltsin, the most powerful political leader in Russia, has whole-heartedly accepted the statist foreign policy and its opposition to NATO expansion. It is almost certain that his successor, after his death or retirement or the next presidential election, would share in his support for this policy. All three of the men that today appear the most likely to succeed Yeltsin oppose NATO expansion and support the statist foreign policy. The three men, Lebed, the recently fired head of the Security Council, Chernomyrdin, the Russian Prime Minister, and Zyuganov, the leader of the Communist Party, have all publicly stated their opposition to NATO expansion and would be unable to alter this policy without incurring serious political damage. The liberal leaders that support a return to an Atlanticist foreign policy have been almost totally discredited by the mainstream political factions. The only dissenting factions with any real support are the extreme nationalists that promote a neo-imperial foreign policy, which not only violently opposes NATO expansion, but would intrigue to place Central Europe back under Russian domination. As a result, it is doubtful that the current statist foreign policy will be altered in the foreseeable future. Even if it should be changed, it would probably be replaced by a foreign policy that continues to oppose NATO expansion.

It would appear that the Russian government does not maintain a monolithic opposition to NATO expansion. Official and private statements have led many Western analysts to believe that Russia would not be willing to take extreme actions to prevent the states of Central Europe from attaining membership in the alliance. Lieven contends that, "if NATO expansion explicitly stops with Visegrad, then it is probable that Moscow will

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352 Ibid., p. 197.

eventually accept this, albeit resentfully."[353] Though the Russians may accept the admission of the states of Central Europe to NATO membership with no more than heated rhetoric, it is probable that they would be unwilling to allow the same for the Baltic states without some sort of active response. The weakness of the Russian economy and armed forces may preclude action in Central Europe, but Russia would be able to make trouble on its borders, particularly in the Baltic states and Ukraine. Some segments of the Russian political elite would probably support a Russian invasion of the Baltic states or Ukraine, if they were accepted for NATO membership. Others, however, might well be deterred by the prospects of war with NATO if Russia attacked states identified be NATO as probable new members. Even if this extreme measure was not carried out, it would certainly be possible for the Russians to foment civil unrest in Estonia and Latvia, and to a lesser extent Lithuania, through the use of the Russian minorities in these states. Such actions could be combined with stringent economic sanctions in an attempt to destabilize these states. Despite the Baltic states' earnest attempts to restructure their trade towards the West, all three states rely on Russian raw materials and energy, as do Ukraine and many Western states. Economic "warfare", conducted in conjunction with Russian-sponsored civil unrest, might prove to be a useful strategy to force the Baltic states to adopt a policy of "friendly neutrality" towards the Russian Federation. Through its forceful opposition, Russia has been able to decisively influence thinking in NATO countries about the risks involved in expansion. In the absence of strong political will within NATO, the Russians may be able to continue delaying expansion far into the future.

2. The Role of American Leadership within NATO

The primary factor concerning the United States is the role of American leadership within the Atlantic alliance. Strong American leadership will be needed if NATO leaders are to overcome doubts caused by Russian opposition and actually add new members to the alliance. In the past, leadership provided by the United States, and specifically the American President, was required to convince the allies to make difficult decisions in the face of opposition or divergent national interests. American leadership is even more critical

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353 Ibid.

in the post-Cold War era, because the threat to the security of Western Europe is much more vague and poorly understood. Analysts Ronald Asmus, Richard Kugler, and Stephen Larrabee wrote the following about the future of NATO expansion:

> US leadership will be critical, especially after the debacle in Bosnia. The US President must be directly and forcefully engaged to forge the necessary consensus, both among the Allies and in Congress, for expansion. Europe will follow and Russia will acquiesce only if the United States provides the requisite leadership and vision to expand the Atlantic and European communities....[354]

As of late, there has been no strong American leadership within the alliance to resolutely guide the expansion process towards the admission of new members.

During the period from late 1993 to late 1996, the Clinton administration maintained a "Russia First" mentality that precluded taking resolute action towards expansion, despite rhetoric asserting American support for NATO expansion. The administration appeared to fear that a rapid or robust expansion of the alliance might damage Russian-American relations and create a Cold Peace. Such an outcome would have invalidated the American foreign policy of the last four years and would have conveyed the impression that the Clinton administration was burdened with foreign policy naiveté. The administration's past pronouncements that Russia was a friendly and democratic country within the family of Western nations might then have been classified as "wishful thinking" and might have proved to be a grave political liability. The perception that a young and inexperienced president, focused on domestic issues, had squandered the gains of the Cold War decades might have caused irreparable political damage to both the Clinton administration and the Democratic Party. As a result, even with Clinton's election to a second term, it is possible that the critical lack of American leadership within the alliance will continue and that NATO expansion will continue to be hesitant and slow, or will even remain "on hold" indefinitely, in deference to Russian sensitivities.

3. A Final Obstacle: The United States Senate

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354 Asmus, Kugler, and Larrabee, "NATO Expansion: The Next Steps," p. 32.

Even with strong American leadership within the alliance, NATO expansion would have to face one final obstacle in the United States, ratification by the Senate. It might prove to be a difficult task to muster the sixty-seven votes needed to clear this hurdle. A modern version of the unexpected political grouping that opposed ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty may reform. In 1949, "the Truman administration faced opposition from three elements: isolationists, defense hawks, and liberal internationalists."[355] During the Cold War, these elements did not significantly oppose the expansion of NATO to include Greece, Turkey, West Germany, and Spain. However, now that the looming Soviet menace is gone, elements of these three diverse factions are once again questioning the need to expand NATO into Central Europe. This modern political triangle encompasses

> ...isolationists opposed to further security commitments, internationalists who see enlargement as antagonistic to Russia and unnecessary for the region's political and economic development and security, and hawks who worry that the additional states will weaken the alliance's defenses, strain the current members' shrinking military resources, and risk leaks of sensitive information.[356]

This odd combination of factions crosses party lines and tends to include the moderate Senators of both parties. Thus it is possible that a combination of liberal and moderate Democrats, and moderate Republican defense hawks or isolationists could muster the thirty-four votes needed to stop NATO expansion. The viability of this political triangle rests on the character of the Senate that resulted from the 1996 elections. An unusually large number of moderate senators from both parties retired and a radicalization of the Senate may therefore occur. The question remains as to whether the Republicans, who marginally strengthened their control of the Senate, will maintain the generally moderate tone of the Senate or join their fellow party members in the House and press for a more rapid enlargement. Either way, the Republican victory probably strengthened the chances for ratification of NATO expansion. Ratification could also have a much greater chance of success if the vote was seen within the Senate not as "a limited policy decision but as a

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355 Rosner, "NATO Enlargement's American Hurdle," p. 15.

356 Ibid., pp. 9-10.

broader referendum on whether the United States should continue to lead NATO or even remain a member."[357]

4. The Enduring Baltic Security Question

Even after a return of American leadership to the process of expanding the alliance and the expectation of a successful ratification by the Senate, the question of the security of the Baltic states would remain. These three states have justifiable moral reasons for seeking admission into NATO. Their history of Russian and Soviet domination and exploitation makes them wary of future Russian intentions, while at the same time they are quickly evolving into Western-style democracies with free market economies. The cultural and historical ties of these states to Europe make them natural supporters of Western ideals and values. Their internal situation has been described as follows:

> ...while acknowledging the importance of regional cooperation and of maintaining friendly relations with Russia, the Baltic states have unambiguously stated that their goal is to become full members of the European Union and NATO--the two organizations they believe can anchor them to the West and provide real security--as soon as possible.
>
> Neutrality or non-alignment as a foreign-policy option is widely and firmly rejected.[358]

Despite their desire to join NATO and their moral justifications for doing so, these states may not be considered by the alliance for membership. They do not yet meet all the requirements specified in the Study on NATO Enlargement. At the same time, the study does state that there is "no fixed or rigid list of criteria for inviting new members to join the Alliance."[359] Many critics of Baltic membership refer to their poor defensibility and the possibility of a strategic over-stretch by the alliance. But this argument loses some of its validity when the poor state of the Russian military and the changing nature of war are taken into account. In the end, Russian opposition will play the critical role. The final

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357 Ibid., p. 15.

358 Ronald Asmus and Robert Nurick, "NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States," Survival, Summer 1996, pp. 122-123.

359 Study on NATO Enlargement, NATO Press Service, Brussels, September 1995, para. 70.

decision on admission for the Baltic states into NATO will probably rest on the perceived effect it would have on Russia and what actions the Russians might take to prevent it from happening.

B. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NATO EXPANSION

Distinct approaches to NATO expansion would obviously have different consequences for European security. In the face of continued Russian opposition, NATO will have to decide how it will expand, or if it will fulfill its "pledge" to remain open for new memberships at all. Three different outcomes appear plausible. First, no expansion will take place. Second, the addition of new members will be carried out in an unmotivated fashion by a leaderless alliance, resulting in a slow, weak, and, most likely, ineffective expansion. Finally, new members will be promptly invited to join a well-led and energetic alliance, resulting in a strong and resolute expansion. The consequences are not necessarily specific to any one outcome, nor is there any guarantee that an outcome will produce a certain consequence. However, there is some probability that specific consequences will be caused by certain outcomes.

If the Atlantic Alliance, without strong American leadership and split by doubts created by forceful Russian opposition, were to make the unlikely, but not impossible, decision not to take on new members, Central Europe would be left in a "no man's land" between NATO and Russia. A probable consequence of this inaction would be chronic instability in the region. Though it is possible that Central Europe, if left as a neutral zone, could independently develop into a community of prosperous and democratic states, it is highly unlikely. The region, rife with ethnic fault-lines and opportunities for irredentism, has only just begun to recover economically and still has a weak tradition of democracy. Without inclusion in an overarching Western security structure, Central Europe might quickly fall into the trap of the "inter-war years." Insecurity, competing territorial claims, and local arms races would undoubtedly slow or reverse economic reforms and gradually replace the fledgling democracies with authoritarian states. In this state of security anarchy, the creation of effective alliances or a regional security bloc would be difficult and mutual animosity would probably pervade the unstable region.

This scenario ignores an improbable, but nonetheless possible, assertive Russian reaction. This reaction could take the form of renewed neo-imperialism in Central Europe, or more likely, the creation of multiple constantly shifting security blocs aligned with or against Russia. No matter which specific consequence occurred, the result would be insecurity on NATO's, and Germany's, eastern border. Though Germany is firmly integrated with the West, long-term insecurity to its east, especially if coupled with expanded Russian influence in Central Europe, could in the long term cause it to choose a path different from that of the rest of Western Europe. This distinct path could lead to a German-led security bloc in Central Europe or a renewed confrontation between Germany and Russia. Though it might be possible for Central Europe to develop independently, chronic instability and turmoil in Central Europe would, in all probability, be the result of NATO choosing not to expand. All of the probable consequences of a failure to accept new members on NATO's part would have very negative effects on European security.

If the Atlantic Alliance, still without strong American leadership, but believing that it must expand or lose all credibility and risk internal disintegration, were to accept only a few new members in a slow and overly cautious manner, the consequences might be similar to the regional instability created by not expanding at all. It is possible that a hesitant and ineffective expansion would fail to provide the necessary security structure and guarantees that might be needed by the insecure Central European states to ensure the growth of democracy and economic prosperity. A corollary to this scenario might be intermittent American leadership that alternately pressed for an active NATO expansion and retreated into a preoccupation with domestic issues, virtually ignoring its European security commitments. The unpredictable nature of this seemingly random "leadership" could fail to create enduring confidence within the Central European states and result in a situation closely resembling a total lack of American leadership. Thus, despite NATO's claim that it had fulfilled its pledge, most of Central and Eastern Europe would still be doomed to exist in a state of security uncertainty and instability. This situation would again create insecurity on NATO's eastern border and fail to safeguard democracy and economic reforms in Central and Eastern Europe.

Another possible negative consequence of this action would be the Russian reaction. Any type of expansion, whether slow and ineffective or strong and resolute, runs the risk of souring East-West relations. The result could be a Cold Peace, or even a return to Cold War, between NATO and a strengthened Russian-dominated CIS. A Cold Peace would be characterized by hostile political relations with only some limited cooperation in economic areas. Both sides would need to maintain higher levels of defense spending to ensure their security across a sharply defined inter-European dividing line or new "Iron Curtain". A Cold War, which would be unlikely considering the state of the Russian economy, would involve a renewed offensive Russian military threat to Western Europe and a return to the policy of containment for NATO. The worst possible consequence that an ineffective NATO expansion could produce, short of an armed conflict between NATO and Russia, would be a combination of instability in Central Europe and a Cold Peace or Cold War. The likelihood of this combination may not be high, but there is a strong possibility that an ineffective NATO expansion would have one or more negative consequences for European security.

If the Atlantic Alliance, with confident American leadership, added new members in a rapid and resolute manner, the chances for chronic instability in Central Europe would be very small. However, this type of expansion would be far more likely to provoke the Russian reaction of a Cold Peace or a renewed Cold War.

A resolute NATO expansion could legitimately take two forms, and each could greatly affect the Russian reaction. The first form, which would probably incite the strongest reaction, would entail expansion with an "open door" policy. The second form, which would attempt to take Russian national interests into account, would be an advertised "limited expansion."

An "open door expansion" would involve the rapid admission of the Visegrad Four states, followed by the gradual entry of other Central and Eastern European states, with the possible inclusion of Russia in the distant future. If successful, this expansion would stabilize democracy and free market reforms across Eurasia and greatly enhance European security. This type of expansion would depend on (a) Russian acceptance of the Baltic states and Ukraine as NATO members, (b) Russian acknowledgment that an expanded

NATO would not threaten Moscow's political and security interests, or (c) NATO's ability to discourage Russian dominance of the CIS, to ensure that Russia would not become strong enough to effectively oppose NATO expansion on Russia's borders. None of these three requirements would be easy to fulfill. Russia would probably attempt to ensure that the Baltic states, and especially Ukraine, did not join NATO. The West's ability to influence the non-Russian members of the CIS is limited and would probably not be strong enough to prevent Russian domination of the region. This type of expansion would also assume that Ukraine, and later Russia, would seek admission into NATO, which might in fact not take place. In the end, the "open door" form of expansion would be very risky and would probably result in a new dividing line across Europe. Russia would be motivated to increase its hold over the other CIS countries and to terminate some arms control agreements with the West, such as the CFE and START Treaties. A Cold Peace or Cold War would probably replace the current, relatively cooperative, state of East-West relations. In this case, the security of certain Central European states would be enhanced by their admission into NATO, while European security in general would be degraded by the confrontation between NATO and the Russian-dominated CIS.

An advertised "limited expansion" would involve the rapid admission of the Visegrad Four states, followed by the gradual entry of the other Central European states, including Austria, Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Romania. As expansion started, in deference to Russian security concerns, Russia would be given guarantees that NATO would not admit any of the former Soviet republics. At the same time, the Baltic states would be given promises that they would still be eligible for EU membership. The leaders of the European Union nations would then have to press for a rapid admission of the Baltic states into the EU to reassure them that they remain in the family of Western nations. Admittance to the EU would give the Baltic states some implied security guarantees, but ones that would be much more palatable to Russia than NATO membership would be. The expanded NATO would also create strong ties with Ukraine to ensure that economic reforms and democratization in that state would continue. This type of expansion, which would create stability in Central Europe while taking Russian national interests into account, would also reduce the possibility of an extreme Russian reaction. While a Cold Peace or, though not

very likely, a Cold War could result, the Russian reaction would probably consist of heated comments and a strengthening of the Russian-dominated CIS, while East-West relations would cool but remain sufficiently satisfactory. Thus, European security would be enhanced by the admission of the nations of Central Europe into NATO and continued constructive relations with Russia. The critical point would be to ensure that the Baltic states and Ukraine could retain their independence and continue to act as a bridge between East and West.[360]

NATO expansion is not the only important issue that will affect the stability and security of Europe. Many of the vital arguments in the debate over NATO expansion could easily become of secondary concern if there were to be a major crisis involving the leading states of Europe. A critical event, such as a violent succession struggle in Russia, ethnic conflict in Central Europe, or a Russian-Ukrainian conflict, could rapidly overshadow the issue of NATO expansion as a primary determinant of European security and stability. While NATO expansion is only one of the many factors that will have an effect on the future of Europe, it may be one of the most influential factors in the near future.

The best possible outcome for European security would be a strong and robust NATO expansion, regardless of continued Russian opposition. This expansion would have stated geographic limits so as to minimize the risks of the Russians taking rash actions that could negatively affect European security. Despite these limits, NATO would not abandon the independent and democratic Baltic states or Ukraine to a Russian sphere of influence. The Baltic states would be offered EU membership while Ukraine would be linked with the West through other institutions and programs of cooperation. All of this would require resolute American leadership within the Atlantic Alliance and United States Senate ratification of specific NATO enlargement agreements.

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360 Some of the basic ideas stated in this section can be found in Richard Kugler, Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor (Santa Monica: RAND, 1996), Chapters 6-7. Though the author's specific ideas differ in many important ways from those in Enlarging NATO, some of the broader concepts in Dr. Kugler's book are very relevant and were adopted by the author.

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